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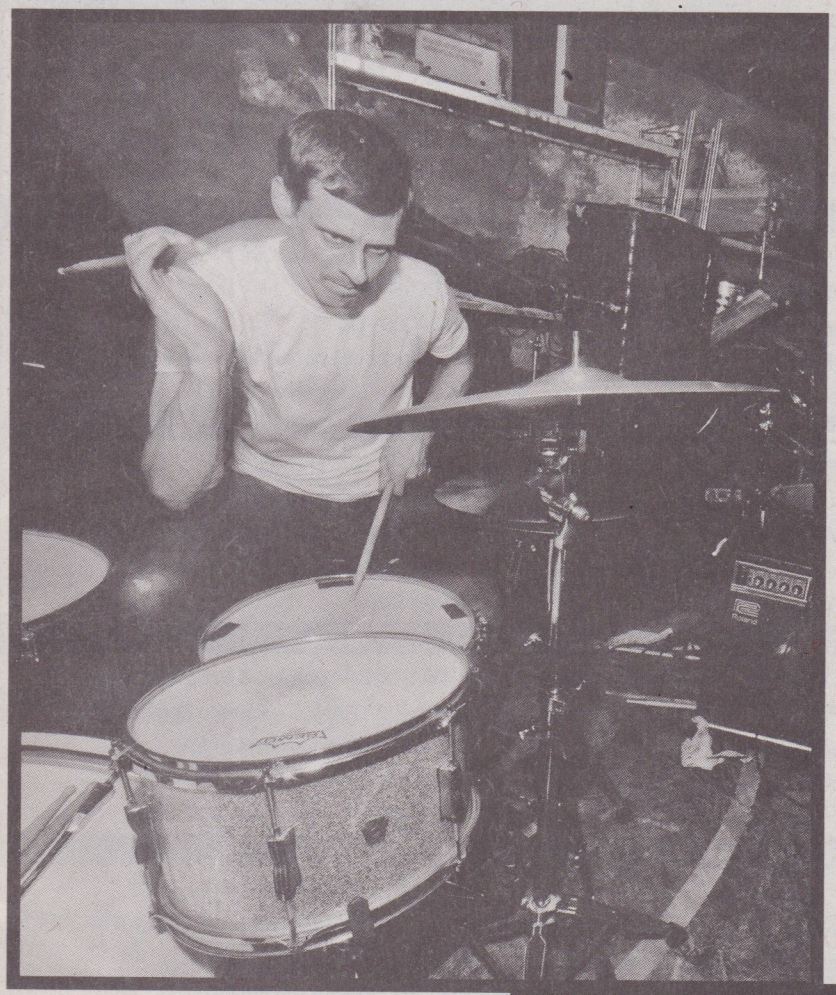

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For what it's worth, here're some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

TOP 10

GRACE AMBROSE

- DESGRACIADOS – Humanidad en la Oscuridad EP
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- GARY WRONG GROUP – Away In Heathen Darkness 12"
- PORNO CASSETTES – "Your Face, a Fucking Disgrace" 45
- ANTI-DOGMATIKSS – Nooooo LP / NO TAG – 12"
- BIG BLEACH – CS / V/A – SUB 2xLP
- SHARK TOYS / UV-TV – split EP
- URANIUM CLUB / IN SCHOOL – live at SNQ
- THE BUG / AMERICAN HATE – live at SNQ
- CHROMA / BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – live at SNQ

MATT BADENHOP

- V/A – SUB 2xLP
- URANIUM CLUB – live at SNQ
- IN SCHOOL – live at SNQ
- SBSM – live at SNQ
- ARCTIC FLOWERS – live at SNQ
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- DIGI BOYS – CS
- ANTIFACES – CS
- V/A – Sonidos de Una Nueva Era Año Ø CS
- ANDROIDS – Lipstick Heroes '78 EP

WILL BLOMQUIST

- LAIKA'S ORBIT – No Matter What It Takes LP
- RAKTA EM TRANSE – Estreito Engano EP
- FUNDAMENTAL – live at SNQ
- GENERACION SUICIDA – live at SNQ
- CRIMINAL CODE – live at SNQ
- BRAINOIL – live at SNQ
- COMMUNION OF THIEVES – live at SNQ
- FLESH WORLD / CHROMA / SIAMESE TWINS – live at SNQ
- THE WORLD / ANINOKO – live at SNQ
- LONGINGS – live

MITCH CARDWELL

- GARY WRONG GROUP – Away In Heathen Darkness 12"
- GØGGS – "She Got Harder/Billy Is A Runaway"
- DD Owen – Plane EP
- STYRENES – Cle 76–79 Unreleased 3x7" box
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- SODA BOYS – "Burgers & Fries/Doghouse"
- RAKTA EM TRANSE – Estreito Engano EP
- EX-CULT – Stick the Knife In EP
- TV SLIME – Flying Fuck EP
- FRUSTRATION – "Autour de Toi/Victoires Prochaines"

ROBERT COLLINS

- IRON LUNG – live at SNQ
- TØRSÖ / ANINOKO – live at SNQ
- THE BUG / AMERICAN HATE – live at SNQ
- CHROMA / FUNDAMENTAL – live at SNQ
- URANIUM CLUB – live at SNQ
- I'M AN INTESTINE – Out of Reach EP
- DUNG / SMZB – split EP / RAKTA EM TRANSE – EP
- V/A – Orbán Népe LP
- FAST FUCKERS / ШАРМ СС – CS
- TONGUE PARTY – CS / HUMAN MANIA – CS

LAYLA GIBBON

- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- SHARK TOYS / UV-TV – split EP / DD OWEN – EP
- GARY WRONG GROUP – Away In Heathen Darkness 12"
- RAKTA EM TRANSE – Estreito Engano EP
- CITY RAM WADDY / SCREAMING ABDABS – split LP
- STYRENES – 3x7" box / V/A – SUB 2xLP
- GØGGS – "She Got Harder" 45 / EX-CULT – Stick the Knife In EP
- DEEP THROATS – LP / TOTAL ABUSE – LP
- URANIUM CLUB / THE WORLD / IN SCHOOL / SBSM / MOZART & more – live at SNQ

DAN GOETZ

- THE BUG – live at SNQ
- CHROMA – live at SNQ
- AMERICAN HATE – live at SNQ
- SHARK TOYS / UV-TV – split EP
- RAKTA EM TRANSE – Estreito Engano EP
- DYKE DRAMA – Tender Resignation LP
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- DD OWEN – Plane EP
- NO TAG – Oi Oi Oi 12"
- AGGRESSION PACT – Desecrate EP

GREG HARVESTER

- DEEP THROATS – Good Bad Pretty LP
- LOST BALLOONS – LP
- HARSH WORDS – Old Sore EP
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- LAIKA'S ORBIT – No Matter What It Takes LP
- URANIUM CLUB – live at SNQ
- SBSM – live at SNQ
- REPLICA / CRAZY BUGS – live at SNQ
- MOZART / THE BUG – live at SNQ
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – live at SNQ

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TOP 10

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KENNY KAOS

- V/A – Noise Pollution EP / JAROMIL SABOR – III LP
- CONMEN – Dick Don't Work EP
- FLESH RAG – It Ain't Enough EP
- STYRENES – Cle 76–79 Unreleased 7" box
- SODA BOYS – "Burgers & Fries/Doghouse"
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- ANDROIDS – Lipstick Heroes '78 EP
- SODA – Without A Head 12"
- GØGGS – "She Got Harder" 45
- ACID FAST – Last Night On Earth LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- PATSY – "Eat It" 45 / RAKTA EM TRANSE – EP
- PRIMITIVE CALCULATORS – "I'm Fucked/Bad" 45
- GØGGS – "She Got Harder" 45 / DD OWEN – Plane EP
- SODA BOYS – "Burgers & Fries/Doghouse"
- SHARK TOYS / UV-TV – split EP
- CITY RAM WADDY / SCREAMING ABDABS – split LP
- PERVERTS AGAIN – LP
- GLASSBOOTS – Demotape EP
- STYRENES – 3x7" box / V/A – Back To Cleveland 2xLP
- STILL NOT QUIET fest – live

RAY LUJAN

- ACID FAST – Last Night On Earth LP
- APATHETICS – My Life Is Amazing LP
- BIG HUGE – Orama EP
- DYKE DRAMA – Tender Resignation 12"
- LAIKA'S ORBIT – No Matter What It Takes LP
- LOST BALLOONS – LP
- MODERN KICKS – The Kicks Ain't Alright CD
- SHARK TOYS / UV-TV split EP
- WAVELESS – Spirit Island 12"
- AGENT ORANGE – live

ROTTEN RON READY

- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- DD Owen – Plane EP
- RAKTA EM TRANSE – Estreito Engano EP
- SODA BOYS – "Burgers & Fries/Doghouse"
- DESGRACIADOS – Humanidad en la Oscuridad EP
- INMATES – LP
- ARMS RACE – Gotta Get Out EP
- COMBAT KNIFE – Extreme Combat EP
- DEEP THROATS – Good Bad Pretty LP
- KORROSIVE / FUNDAMENTAL – live at SNQ

FRED SCHRUNK

- LAIKA'S ORBIT – No Matter What It Takes LP
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- LOST BALLOONS – LP
- ACID FAST – Last Night On Earth LP
- SODA BOYS – "Burgers & Fries/Doghouse"
- DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – Accumulated Error LP
- QUOD MASSACRE – V Zmajevem Gnezdu LP
- SODA – Without A Head 12"
- DEEP THROATS – Good Bad Pretty LP
- RAKTA EM TRANSE – Estreito Engano EP

LENA TAHMASSIAN

- ANTI-DOGMATIKSS – Nooooo LP
- NAVE NODRIZA / SRASRSRA – split EP
- APATHETICS – My Life Is Amazing LP
- DESGRACIADOS – Humanidad en la Oscuridad EP
- SHARK TOYS / UV-TV – split EP
- PORNO CASSETTES – "Your Face, a Fucking Disgrace" 45
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- LOST BALLOONS – LP
- RAKTA EM TRANSE – Estreito Engano EP
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS / CHROMA – live at SNQ

ELI WALD

- THE BUG / AMERICAN HATE – live at SNQ
- REPLICA / IN SCHOOL / SBSM – live at SNQ
- URANIUM CLUB – live at SNQ
- BUCK BILOXI & THE FUCKS – live at SNQ
- CHROMA – live at SNQ
- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- DESGRACIADOS – Humanidad En La Oscuridad EP
- AGNOSTIC FRONT – No One Rules LP
- GARY WRONG GROUP – Away In Heathen Darkness 12"
- SODA BOYS – "Burgers & Fries/Doghouse"

BRENDAN WELLS

- PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"
- GLASSBOOTS – Demotape EP
- PERVERTS AGAIN – Our Big Party LP
- REPLICA / IN SCHOOL – live at SNQ
- MOZART / THE BUG / AMERICAN HATE – live at SNQ
- LOST BALLOONS – LP
- TOTAL ABUSE – Excluded LP
- DD OWEN – Plane EP
- PORNO CASSETTES – "Your Face, a Fucking Disgrace" 45
- NO TAG – Oi Oi Oi 12"

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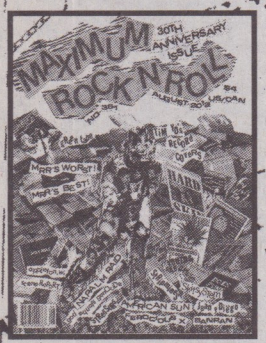
LIKE WHAT YOU'RE READING IN *MRR* #395?
RECOMMENDED READING FROM THE MRRchive:

MRR #304/Sept '08

Includes a **Colombia scene report** sure to appeal to anyone intrigued by the documentary written about in this latest issue. Also featured: Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, The Measure [SA], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, and FPO.



MRR #351/Aug '12

Manic Relapse fest performers NAPALM RAID from Canada interviewed in this issue. Also: 30th Anniversary Issue special, including USHC teens STRESSORS, L.A.'s GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE, BANRAN from Korea, Swedish HC legends SKITSYSTEM, AMERICAN SUN from NYC, NC's STRIPMINES, FEROCIOUS X from Japan, Colombian artists Juan y Diëgo, and an Appleton, WI scene report.

MRR #390/Nov '15

Another fest roundup of sorts feauting Toronto's Not Dead Yet festival and Chatanooga's Do Ya Hear We? fest. Plus: AS MERCENÁRIAS from Brazil, OBNOX out of Ohio, SBSM from Oakland, Edmonton's STRANGLED, Chicago's own POPULATION, PDX rockers EMASCULATOR, , NJ/Bay Area pop-punkers PARASITES, plus photos from the opening of DIY Space for London and Springfield, IL's Dumb Fest 3D.

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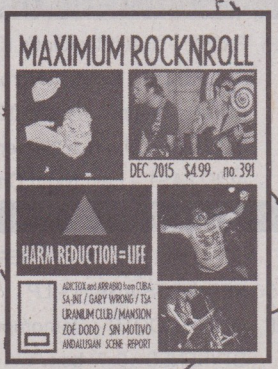
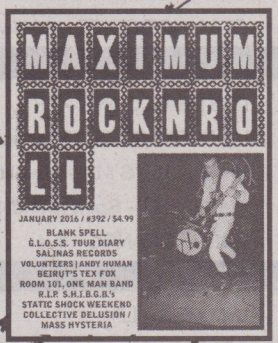
MRR's Latest and Greatest



MRR #391/Dec '15

The MINNEAPOLIS URANIUM CLUB BAND, GARY WRONG from Alabama, Fort Worth's SIN MOTIVO, SA-INT from Finland, Oakland's MANSION, first ever Cuban band interview with ARRABIO and ADICTOX, San Francisco's TSA, an interview with activist Zoë Dodd, photo spreads from All Punks Go For It and Not Dead Yet 2015, and an Andalusia scene report.



MRR #392/Jan '16

BLANK SPELL from Philadelphia, Oakland's ANDY HUMAN, G.L.O.S.S. tour diary, East Anglian hardcore from VOLUNTEERS, S.H.I.B.G.B.'s retrospective, Detroit's Salinas Records, Beirut's TEX FOX, one-man band from New Orleans ROOM 101, photo spreads from Static Shock Weekend and Austin's Collective Delusion/Mass Hysteria exhibition, Still Not Quiet on the Western Front fest announcement.

MRR #393/Sep '12

2015 Year-End Top Tens, the Bay Area's BUSTED OUTLOOK, SCAB EATER from Australia, NYC/Japan's SEI TO SHI, COMMUNION OF THIEVES from El Paso, and a Cacophonie Nights photo spread.

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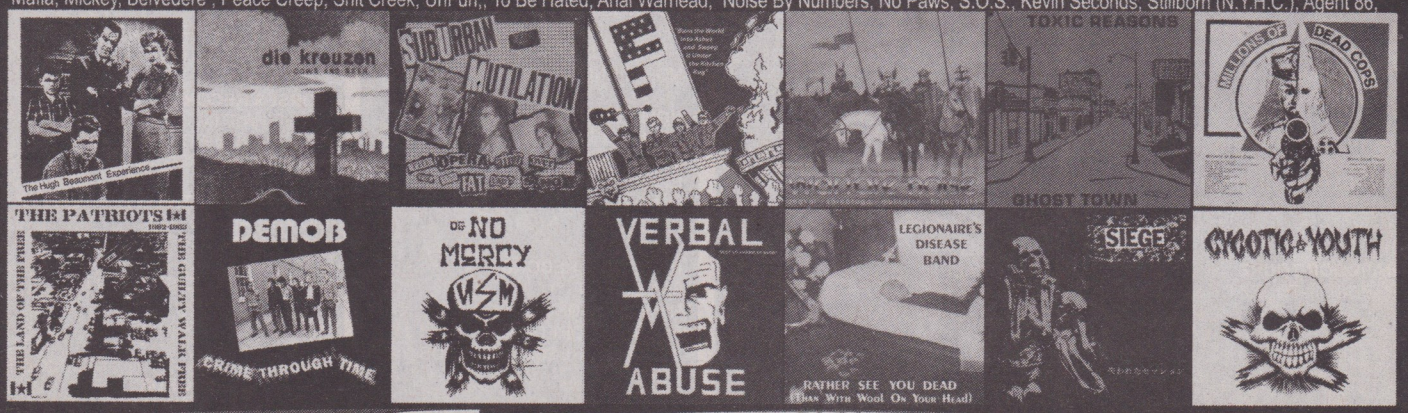

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR,

I have a question about the Black Flag bars. I got The Bars tattooed on or near my wrist when I was twenty-three, about nine years ago. I wanted to know the meaning behind the four bars. I feel like a poser asking this question, but I'm not too punk to begin with. Just a huge fan of punk rock.

I used to get picked on growing up and hated the jocks so punk appealed to me because of the non-conformity. I would sit in my room reading lyrics to bands like Crass and the Dead Kennedys. So anyway, back to the Black Flag subject. I don't want to jump around too much...What the hell do The Bars stand for? Can anyone tell me? When I was a teenager I used to go online and look all this shit up and all I could find was some kind of African Flag that had three bars going up and down the same way. I didn't get it.

People think it's a cover up for an old tattoo and I have to go into an explanation about the band. We all know Black Flag here but it seems I'm lacking a simple fact. Can someone educate me on this simple subject?

OK, back to my Top Ramen spread. Thanks, y'all.

Yours truly,

Cheeseburger
Pelican Bay State Prison
CDCR #AR1918
D. Gurga
PO Box 7500
Crescent City, CA 98532

Hey Cheeseburger,

Sorry to say, but unfortunately the answer to your question isn't that interesting! The Bars (designed by Raymond Pettibon) represent a waving black flag. Pettibon allegedly said, "If a white flag means surrender, a black flag represents anarchy."

There are however lots of interesting stories about how The Bars came to be tattooed on so many people and there are even a few books about them. Maybe someone reading this will send you a copy of Barred for Life, *a photo book published by PM Press a few years back, and hopefully some people will write to you and let you know their personal story with The Bars!*

Thanks for writing,

Grace

"I am ready to continue to fight to defend our right to criticise corrupt leaders and I do no fear any repercussion, because I know you will not let me fight alone."
—Fahmi Reza

Los Crudos played a show in the mid- to late 90s in Memphis where we shared the bill with Deathreat. It was an awesome show to say the least but one of the vivid memories I have from that day was one particular kid who stood out. We approached him and introduced ourselves and quickly found out he was not from Memphis but was visiting from Malaysia. He was extremely nice and all around a cool person.

Fast forward to 2015. I was over at the *MRR* compound and upon entering I noticed someone who I did not recognize as a regular at *MRR*. I walked over and introduced myself. He looked at me, smiled and said, "I've met you before." I was at a loss, and could not place where we might have met. He let me know he met me in Memphis and without another word I said, "Yes! The kid from Malaysia!" His name is Fahmi. I invited him over to my apartment around the corner, and we sat around listening to music and talked about life and punk in Malaysia as well as here in the U.S. etc. It was an enriching night shared with a really awesome punk/artist.

I recently learned that Fahmi is facing some trouble for his art—see malaysiakini.com for more information. He created a pieces that criticizes a Malaysian politician. Fahmi has to meet police this Sunday to make a statement and may possibly face three years in prison for his clown face rendition of Najib. Please read it and stay tuned for updates and possible actions and ways me may be able to support Fahmi.

Thank you,

Martin Sorrondeguy

It was a pleasure to spend time with Fahmi last year in San Francisco. We'll be posting updates about his situation on the MRR *facebook page.*

Dear *MRR*,

Shanghai, China based punk band Round Eye (ex members of Libyan Hit Squad) is booking first European tour this August and is looking for DIY/Punk/Whatever festivals that will have us in Western/Central Europe area. Any information would be super rad. We're pretty housebroken too.

—Chachy
roundeyeshanghai@gmail.com
facebook.com/roundeyeband

The archive project is in full swing and soon we'll have a full-time archivist living in the house with us! Stay tuned for updates on project-specific fundraising and how you can get involved. Right now we're looking for a UX whiz to helpus build the front-facing parts of our database. Is that you? archives@maximumrocknroll.com.

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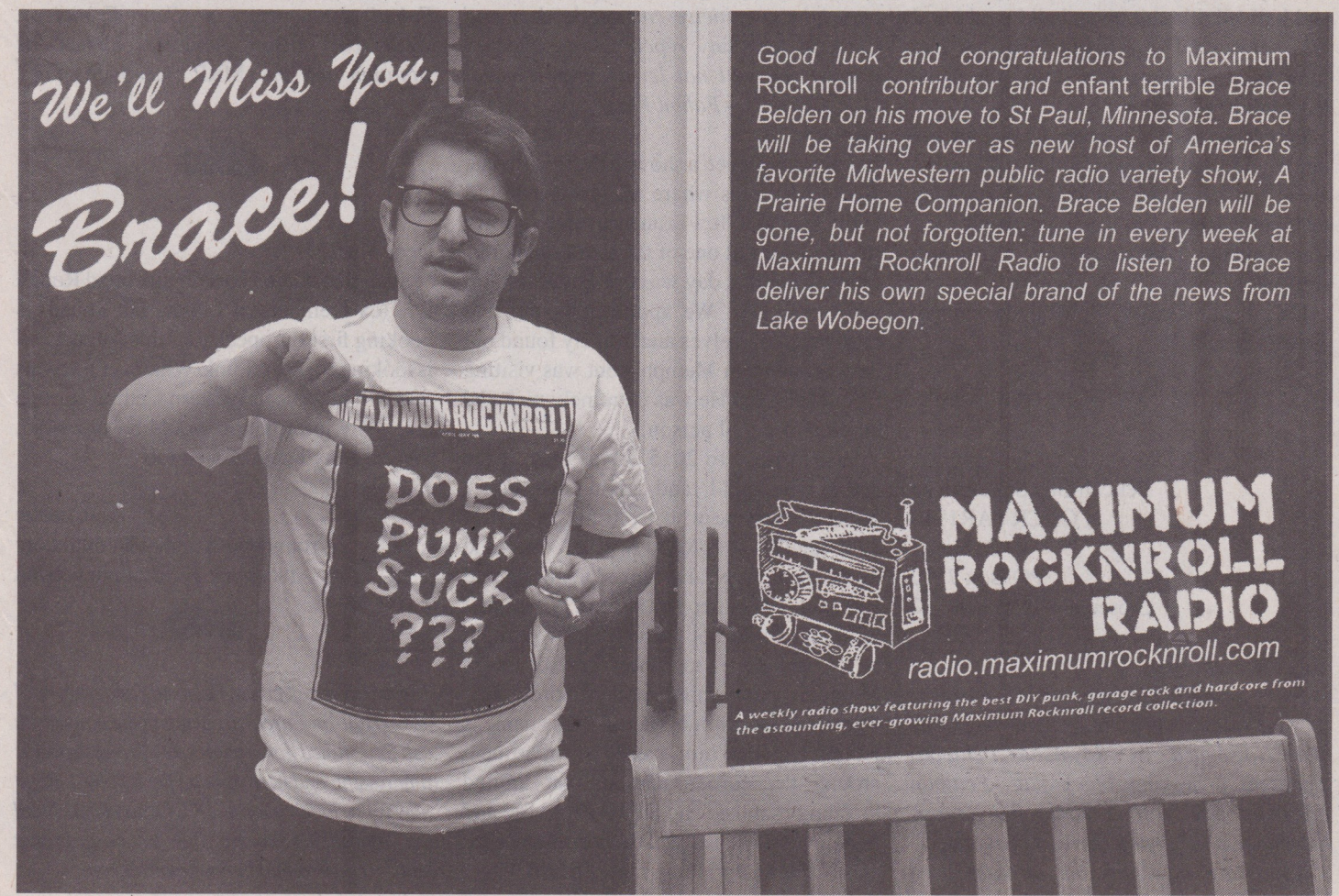

Good luck and congratulations to Maximum Rocknroll *contributor and* enfant terrible *Brace Belden on his move to St Paul, Minnesota. Brace will be taking over as new host of America's favorite Midwestern public radio variety show, A Prairie Home Companion. Brace Belden will be gone, but not forgotten: tune in every week at Maximum Rocknroll Radio to listen to Brace deliver his own special brand of the news from Lake Wobegon.*

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COLUMNS

"But when that which is perfect has come,
Then that which is in part will be done away."
—First Corinthians 13:10

Sgt. Al Powell: *Hey Roy, how you feeling?*
John McClane: *Pretty fuckin' unappreciated, Al.*

"You say we're just a joke
Well, we are, but you don't get it.
You think you're so progressive
But you know you're talking bullshit."
—Quincy Punx, "Fuck You
(If You Can't Take a Joke)"

Friday Night on Coke with a Crowbar

Hear ye! Hear ye! Let it be known from this day henceforth *MRR*'s only all-Oi!-column will be no more. At least not in its current form (Or name?). The skinhead train has finally run off the rails. Our track was greased! What happened, you ask? We here at *Still the New Breed* LLC are trying to figure it out ourselves. Maybe it was making fun of the *MRR* alum band MOZART (more like *NOPE*ZART) or saying that if the DOWNTOWN BOYS really want to experience *Full Communism* they should get a practice space in North Korea...And stay there. But that's just me being suspicious. These are the facts: I got a longwinded email last month that boiled down to a single ultimatum: "Narrow the scope of *Still the New Breed* to exclusively encompass outspoken leftist, S.H.A.R.P., or RASH affiliated oi [sic] bands or cease reviewing oi [sic] from now on." Whatta buncha diarrhea! Another nail in the coffin of the First Amendment, I say! This shit also infringes on my Eighth Amendment protections as it would be cruel and unusual punishment to make me slog thru all that Pinko AnarkOi! I'd rather not, *Comrade* Ambrose. I think Mr. Dr. Ben Carson said it best, "...This is how [*MRR*] frightens people and gets [Turbo & Gang] to shut up, that is what the PC culture is all about..." Wise words from a Brain Surgeon!

So if I can't write about Oi! Oi! music, then what choices have these Fellow Travelers left me with? Am I to be relegated to writing a "lifestyle" column? Does *MRR* need another oversensitive punk (or skin) writing 1,500 words about whatever booolshit is rattlin' around inside their bad-haircut'd head? We say no! Wanna read about our new cat, Chalupa? I bet not! How's about an "occupation" themed column, similar to *Teaching Resistance*? We started work on something called, *In the Paint...*, an in-depth, high stakes look into the trials and tribulations of being an extremely handsome but also extremely poor skinhead housepainter. It ended up reading like a mix between a Richard Allen novel and a John Birch pamphlet ("Skinhead Defends the Constitution"). The gang was digging it, but the new coord, Brendan Wells (of URANIUM CLUB "fame" and registered Weinercrat), vetoed it. "Too political," he says. *MRR* can have one and only one overtly political column in the mag: Gwampa "Lefty" Hooligan. By the way, I just read *What's Left* for the first time (ever!) all the way through. I didn't understand a single word. Turns out I was reading it upside down. Flipping it over didn't help much either! Ba-zing!

At the end of the day, I'm a creature of habit. I told the coordinators I still wanted to write a music column. I asked them where they saw a deficiency in the mag. I asked where I could be of maximum service. Know what they said? It was one word: Ska. Kabong! Ska. Blorf! Mount Zion's a minefield. Ska. *Maxiskam Skack'n'Skall*. Fuuuuk. Ska.

It was a shrewd decision. Ska is unsketchable. (Other than that one band doing that one song—if ya don't know, go ask a skin). Oi! bands run these poor San Franciscoids ragged trying to figg'r out who's "bad," who's "good," and who's just OK. But still maybe not OK? It's too much! But not ska. Ska is safe. Just ask my mom, she loves DANCE HALL CRASHERS. I bet yours does, too. Try playing Oi! around your mum. She'll hate it. Years and years ago I almost caused Mama Turbo to crash her Ford Taurus into a Kroger cuz I was blasting ANTISOCIAL and yelling along to "New Punks." Close call. So here we go—grow your hair into gross shoulder-length dreads, pull on some baggy shorts, and lace up your Airwalks, cuz the new age of ska (we're in the 16th wave, FYI) is upon us. No woman no cry...

THE OFFENDERS – *X* LP/CD (Destiny / Rudy's Back / KOB / Stomp / Bomber Music): These four soulful skins from Cosenza, Italy, play organ heavy, horn-free ska similar in tone and style to the BODYSNATCHERS or RANCID when they go full-rudie ("Daly City Train," "Corazon de Oro," "Hooligans"). The fact that the OFFENDERS are skins makes me think of the PRESS, but the OFFENDERS come off more as a party band. Real talk, the best track on the album is "Tons of Drunks and Party Scum." It's catchy but doesn't deliver me outta Babylon. Jah feel me? I don't ever feel like skanking in the sun, but maybe you, the reader, do. The song "Martens Style" sounds like "Time for Action" by SECRET AFFAIR. That's kinda nice. Grade: B-

THE HEMPSTEADYS – *El Amor De Los Muertos* CD/Digital (self-released): It's not hard to be mean. It's real easy (and funny) to just shit on something. Just so you know—I'm not breaking a sweat. I mean, this is an eleven-piece band from New London, Connecticut, who has put out a monster-themed "rock (steady) opera" concept album. Is this what college kids in New London listen to? High school kids? Seventh-graders? You get two vocalists in this band of buffoons: One is a rapper, and the other sorta sounds like STURGEON

channeling LINT. The sound is big. There is a full horn section complimented by a bongo dude and a keyboard player. On a few songs, all eleven doodz sing along. This is somewhere between the SLACKERS and BIG D AND THE KIDS TABLE. The cover art is a giant mummy-pharaoh looking down on a Frankenstein fighting a disco-skeleton sporting bellbottoms and an afro while Frankie's Bride and a Dracula look on. If your biggest concern in life is whether you should get an Xbox One with Rainbow Six or just say fuck it and go for the Limited Edition Xbox One with Halo 5: Guardians, the HEMPSTEADYS might be for you. The drummer was in SHAI HULUD… Bummer. Grade: D+

YOUNGER THAN NEIL — *Know Their Parts* CD-EP/Digital (self-released): I just got the name. Like, right now as I typed it out. Bad name. Whatever. This is not-terrible ska-punk from Denver. You get five songs on this EP. When the band is at their best (as on the opener, "Made to Kill") they sound like PROPAGANDHI circa *How To Clean Everything*, but only the ska-bits. There's even a dude who comes in on the sly and croons like John K. Samson on a few tracks. It's a nice touch. I bet it's hard to not fall into LESS THAN JAKE territory if you're a straight-up ska punk band. YOUNGER THAN NEIL goes there for sure, but like I said, it's not terrible. Some of the song writing seems contrived, as on the song "Phone Sex," which is about the singer and his friends being broke. What could be a relatable tale of ennui and laziness gets boiled down to a joke about willing to do anything—gasp—even phone sex. *"No job hope means no job prospects / I'll cook French fries or work in phone sex..."* Go do it, you bums. Grade: C average.

SOUL RADICS — *Big Shot* LP + CD included (Grover): Music like dirt! This is some legit rocksteady-inspired contemporary ska. A couple of the songs on *Big Shot* are laid back and slooow and would fall into the category of lovers rock (minus the synthy trappings of that genre). The tracks "Chance to be with You" and "Really a Mess" could be two lost LORNA BENNETT sides, while "Mash Dem All" is an undercover-tuff burner that dips into dancehall vocal stylings from front woman Dani Radic. It works well. The more up-tempo tunes sound something akin to Moon Ska/NYC bands in the mid-'90s (METRO STYLEE, SKINNERBOX, ISAAC GREEN & THE SKALARS). It's not a bad thing. It's obvious the SOUL RADICS value and respect the history of Jamaican music and have handily produced one of the top ska albums of 2015. They look like a blast live, too. Grade: A-

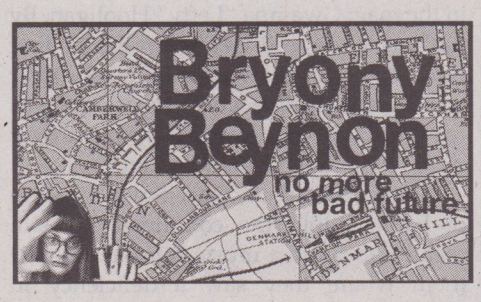
UNIDAD 69 — *The Gorosonsoyo and Mr. Grinder Prophecies* CD/Digital: South America gets a pass most times. As long as the music is DIY and kinda dirty, I'll probably think it's tops regardless of genre. That rule holds up for UNIDAD 69 who hail from Armenia in Quindío. These choleric Columbians play a mix of thrash, hardcore, and ska. I don't have any lyrics, but judging by their Facefuck and album imagery, this is hang-the-cops political stuffs. The more I listen to this, the more I dig it. Some of the dudes wear luchador masks, which is apt because the breakdowns in these songs drop like Rey Mysterio from the top rope. Flying elbow drop! The easiest comparisons are VOODOO GLOW SKULLS and the long running Mexican skacore band SEKTA CORE (and GWAR's "Saddam a Go-Go"). At times the band falls into floppy-'hawk CITIZEN FISH territory. I'd like to hear these five songs put to vinyl or even on a tape, but I understand CDs are a much more viable format for the majority of the world. I'll just dub this to a TDK X20 and be stoked. Good-timing, genre-bending music. Grade: Circle A

And that's a wrap! We'll type at you next month with more ska. Or whatever else they tell me to write about. Conscious hip-hop? Sad singer-songwriter? A woman with a theremin? *MRR*s is *Punks Planets*.

ENDNOTES:

1) Even though the Oi! is dead, you can still get a hold of me at AmericanBootGang@gmail.com.

2) We're working on a petition to get Oi! back in *MRR*. Email your congressman and tell him to email the coordinators at mrr@maximumrocknroll.com.



In honor of my slow stomp towards grande dame / gran damned status (thirty years old this month) I've given myself a blue rinse and am gonna retreat to listicle indulgence, hammering out these frayed thoughts with the retreating vigor, piss, spit, and vinegar of an officially old gal (No apologies and all respects to the real-ass wrinkly set). What gives? Still not over punk, still not loving police, still a bit sorry to those who must edit this. Grammar was always a cage, Grandma is still full of rage. BB 2016 x

0) Feeling ungrateful for music and my waning ability to construct even slightly amusing metaphors around sound. Waiting on a new story to live. Hey now. Punk here in London is better than ever, the endless mutation and new combinations of people cramming into small rooms to play instruments over each other swells my heart. Still too many boys. Making some powermoves, making some choices about new cities and different lives, wherever we are we're living, as ever, in desperate times.

1) 2015 was one for big projects and realizing dreams. There were downsides, though. Power Lunches, London venue, dear basement, dearest queers, dear broken toilet, punk venue for most of the most alive gigs of the last four years, closed in a flurry as all London things do. Some, who didn't seem to quite feel that warm glow of what happens when a building becomes *more*, chortled over the autopsy, asserting smugly that it was a shithole anyway (Anyway? By design, dear nonbeliever!) while others got sad, got angry, and saw the place out in a hail of glory. Blaze of rage. Balloon gas. Morgue gigglers this way come, we will squish your faces into the concrete you seem to applaud. Whichever.

The grumbling got me thinking, you know. This was a space that didn't necessarily really ever have its shit together, didn't organize itself particularly efficiently, was a source of frustration as much as joy for the people who worked there. But it was still a dream home. All the most beautiful things are held together with tape. Someone told me a story about someone they know using some new app to get food delivered and having the guy who was getting paid minimum wage (plus British "tips") to strap an outsize box to their bike and cycle through the pissing rain with their organic pizza order also turn out to be drummer of their favourite band. Which leads me neatly on...

Monsieur Le Ratcharge and Lewis have been chatting about this in these here pages. I'm not an "old days" nostalgia tripper, and god knows Paypal is convenient, but we must grip tightly to the happy accidents, the failures, the useless forgetfullers of punk rock and not flatten our landscape into one of smooth, shiny, and neatly designed punk rock service provision. I

think about what it means to provide a service as I usher peers out of DIY Space after a gig and silently note down who acts up because they've had a few beers and who is chill about the fact that we need to keep our precarious license. When they expect me to smile after a volunteer shift when I'm mopping up their vomit, we think about affective labor, like last night when I heard a woman complaining that I was sweeping aggressively, one gets to thinking about who's servicing who, how universal the ideas are of what money allows us to do. Service provision is the attitude that states "I'm paying, so I expect a standard,"—customer is always reich: it is a concept which surrounds us, byproduct of capitalism, of course what isn't, etc, but we gotta resist the snide leading the blind, embrace failure, and disrupt the idea that even in spaces, mediums, or arenas where shit is meant to be different, the idea that a service, whatever it might be, is provided to the entitled by the beleaguered, seems hard to resist. We have to.

400) A recent reunion with an old school friend was both enlightening and confusing. She was interviewing me for a podcast. We found ourselves peeling back the layers of early teens. I drank some mulled wine left over from Christmas, and it could have been the sugar or the booze in it, but I saw my teenage face clearly for a second. I remember me then. I was not a generous girl. I resented this woman then as deeply as I am spellbound by the idea, with hindsight, of her teenage self now, like why I wasn't best friends with this cool nerd girl who had tippexed the FALL and LE TIGRE on her backpack while I was careering through 56k downloads of California pop punk acting like I was better than her in order to try and snare the boy I was obsessed with who would, after so many years of friendzoning me to the point of near extinction, then flip and try to coerce me into taking a picture of my boobs with a 0.2 megapixel webcam. I had located cool as by definition a distant concept. I quizzed her on if she remembered my fourteenth birthday party where she bought an At The Drive In CD and then some boys I didn't know showed up with a bong and I freaked out, over-stimulated, terrified of the thing I wanted most (Skateboarding boys and their shoulders, the mythic thereof, not the weed, so much, which while I partook of once or twice, my asthma pump hidden in the pocket of my oversized jumbo cord JNCOs). Terror / desire / dick / let me down easy.

69) I also remembered, although did not share with her, that around this time, a little earlier, in order to get some particularly mean girls off my back, I created a pretend boyfriend, or rather, an email address for him. I called him Vincent. He was East Asian with blue eyes and navy hair. Why I thought anyone would believe a manga character was hanging out at a skatepark in South Wales, I don't know. I set myself up for a hard fall. Why would flesh ever compete? Oh Vincent. He used to email my friends and tell them what a good kisser I was, and how he was moving to America so he could never ever meet them. I had literally never kissed anyone at this point and could have probably worked a little harder to make him seem real. All boyfriends are imaginary. We get the intimacy we deserve, even the everyday thud of an ordinary love. Apple Bottom jeans, boots with the fur.

$) Girls screaming along to the new Rihanna in the cafe where I sit. Work work work work. Last week I put a poster up at our DIY space that says "Never Work" (after a Mr. G Debord, natch.). An angry individual scrawled over it in black sharpie "WHAT AND WHAT LIVE OFF YOUR TRUST FUND? JOIN A UNION GET ORGANISED." Polarizing discourse for the po-faced. The line that says the girl who doesn't want to work is a lazy trust funder is tied up in the myth of the dignified worker who presumably (relatedly, see above) "lives to serve." We are all tired. I'm forever caught up believing you can hate work, want to see beyond it, but still want to not get totally shafted while you work there. LIVE YOUR PASSIONS / NEVER WORK / LIVE WITHOUT DEAD TIME. Rihanna and Guy / sitting in a tree. Incantations, suggestions, demands. *Ne travaillez jamais.* 1963 is still close. I've found a place, grey haired crone, me, where (mostly) I'm able to pick when and how I get my paid work done, and it's a reality I gaze at with a deep wonder every time a trickle of cash hits my account, because it is beyond fortunate, as hard, stressful, and confusing at is it, to dictate the terms. Maybe there's too much easy romance in imagining a world without work, politicizing the sofa struggle while the slow graft, paper-based people wrangling of the union politics and mobilizing the workforce is as grueling as it can be cold. Both need so badly to be done, and one begets the other, silly. Step one: Demand universal basic income now so we can all be luxury bitches.

Even though the month will be over by the time you're holding these inky pages in your hands, it's the beginning of February as I'm writing this, and over the next two weeks I will be doing the following things (in sequential order): playing the first show with my band DR. IDENTITY, traveling to the Bay Area for the Still Not Quiet on the Western Front fest that this very magazine is organizing (getting to see the WORLD and URANIUM CLUB on the same bill is going to be a dream come true), and then turning 31 years old. I also have some new projects on the horizon (short list: writing for a third issue of the recently resurrected *Dynamite Hemorrhage* fanzine, starting new bands with relative strangers who have a mutual love of the CLEAN, getting back into a real radio studio for the first time in three years), and I'm really happy to finally be breaking out of the inertia that had been weighing me down both creatively and emotionally for the last several months. Things are happening.

If the late '70s mutation of punk into post-punk was truly motivated by a rejection of what had quickly become stylistic orthodoxy, by the impulse to rip it up and start again, then the piano and flute-accented minimalist twitch of London's OCCULT CHEMISTRY shouldn't seem so radically odd, and the fact that it does is just part of the peculiar charm of their only release, a four-song 7" from 1980. In true UK DIY fashion, the group came together after vocalist Martha Tilson shared some of her poems with her friend Glenn Carmichael, and he decided to bankroll the recording of a single, which only meant that an actual band needed to be assembled. They recruited a few more friends, set Martha's poetry against a backdrop of scrappy and skeletal but highly rhythmic post-punk (Glenn contributed additional vocals and "whistling"), and never so much as played a single show after leaving the studio, although they did manage to film a video for the EP's knockout, "Fire," at the London College of Printing that thankfully lives

on today via everyone's favorite internet moving image repository. The resulting single is definitely a record of its time and place (England in the shadow of Rough Trade, et al. at the dawn of the 1980s), whether it's the spiky, MO-DETTES-ish bass-driven danceability of "Fire" or the winding, semi-obscured piano line and clattering percussion in "Water" paired with a series of insistent, repetitive chants that recall the ecstatically off-kilter energy of the first RAINCOATS album. By 1982, Martha Tilson had reappeared as a vocalist with A CERTAIN RATIO on their *Sextet* album, leaving behind the staggering possibilities of what OCCULT CHEMISTRY could have done had they decided to keep things going as a proper band. (Dining Out, glenncarmichael.co.uk/music/occult.html)

Austria's LIME CRUSH are back after their killer debut 7" last year, and some of the loose, shambling threads that had previously tied the band to the anarchic pop rush of Swiss kindred spirits KLEENEX and CHIN CHIN have been tightened into something leaner and more sharp-edged this time around. "Never," their side of a new split single with the German group ALTE SAU, is all frantic guitar strum with angular underpinnings closer to AUTOCLAVE in early '90s Washington DC than the usual suspects of late '70s/early '80s European femme-punk, juxtaposing relatively sweet and lilting vocals in the verse with the chorus' desperate, sore-throated rebel girl group screams. The split 7" single is an inherently risky format, and the keyboard-saturated and vaguely Paisley Underground-tinged retro garage-punk stylings of ALTE SAU can't really help but pale in comparison to their Viennese friends—imagine a less debauched, German-speaking incarnation of the LYRES (or any randomly chosen band from the 1980s Voxx Records roster, really), and you're getting warmer. That LIME CRUSH song, though… (Fettkakao, fettkakao.com)

True mysteries of UK DIY file: Bristol's the PHOTOGRAPHS released one single in 1979 on the Do Not Bend label (presumably their own, as it was the first and last record on that imprint), housed in a plain paper sleeve without any supplementary details or information beyond the most basic credits on the record's center labels. In contrast to the more serrated sounds of the UK post-punk scene of the time, the band offered up three songs worth of just wimpy enough power pop marked by slightly awkward musicianship and plainly sung female vocals that suggest the missing link connecting the threadbare minimalism of the MARINE GIRLS, the crystalline punk-informed pop sensibility of DOLLY MIXTURE, and the jangling rush of C86 bands like the FAT TULIPS or TALULAH GOSH. The A-side's brilliant, deceptively simple "Second Best" is like a more wistful and introverted counterpart to the SHIVVERS' bright and bubbly power pop staple "Teen Line," as if that band had taken their cues from the dreamy, less-is-more sprawl of the self-titled VELVET UNDERGROUND LP instead of BADFINGER and the RASPBERRIES, while "Seas" and "Here I Go Again" on the flip could have just as easily been products of the early '90s International Pop Underground lo-fi love rock axis as UK DIY in the late '70s post-DESPERATE BICYCLES era. And then, just like that, they were done. If anyone out there has a copy of this one that they don't need anymore, I'll gladly take it off your hands.

It might be debatable amongst the readership of a punk zine, but there really was a point when the PIXIES were kind of terrifying in a surrealist fever dream sort of way, and *Crystal Cafe*, the newest LP from London doom and gloom noise-pop trio WITCHING WAVES, occupies that same precarious space between jagged post-punk abrasion and sugary-sweet melodicism. On "Seeing Double," the barely-controlled tension in the vocal duet between guitarist Mark Jasper and drummer Emma Wigham conjures up the same hallucinatory quiet-loud-quiet pop ferociousness that Frank Black and Kim Deal had perfected as an art form on *Doolittle*, and Jasper's pained solo shriek before the closing chorus might as well be a direct translation of Black Francis' famous exhortation about slicing up eyeballs. When Wigham takes over the microphone, like on the angular "Twister" and "Red Light," there's strong echoes of Melbourne's underrated LOVE OF DIAGRAMS, who have spent most of the past decade guided by similar inspirations from the mid-to-late '80s American rock underground (one part PIXIES, one part pre-major label SONIC YOUTH), although WITCHING WAVES generally tend to lean more heavily on gauzy, psychedelic-streaked '60s pop versus the affinity of those Australians for the frantic urgency of post-punk's '78-'80 heyday. The band's previous LP, 2014's wonderful *Fear of Falling Down*, had the misfortune of appearing in late December, a time when everyone's attention is seemingly focused on looking backward and processing the information overload of hundreds of year-end lists, so do your part to make sure that this one doesn't also fall through the cracks. (Happy Happy Birthday to Me, hhbtm.com)

Fellow Portland residents (and FALL enthusiasts) TYRANTS have a brand new eight-song cassette/sixteen-page zine combo called *Dark Match*, featuring some of the best contemporary dual-guitar clang and scrape this side of SPRAY PAINT. Bassist/vocalist Ted spits out his pitch-black lyrics with a cutting sneer, talking shit on everything from people who put on BOB MARLEY's *Legend* album at parties to this city's rapid decline into a hyper-gentrified yuppie playground to asinine pro gear/pro 'tude rocker culture (none of those things are necessarily mutually exclusive). I swiped my very first email address in the late '90s from the title of a Shellac song and spent a good chunk of high school wearing out cassette dubs of DAZZLING KILLMEN and SCRATCH ACID albums that penpals had sent me, so this sort of jabbing, nihilistic noise-rock really speaks to the teenage Touch and Go Records obsessive in me. Having said that, I think that what I appreciate most about TYRANTS is that they manage to evoke that particular strain of gnarled racket without any of the grossly macho and aggro trappings that ultimately wound up alienating me from that whole scene years ago. No small feat, believe me. (Regrets, tyrants.bandcamp.com)

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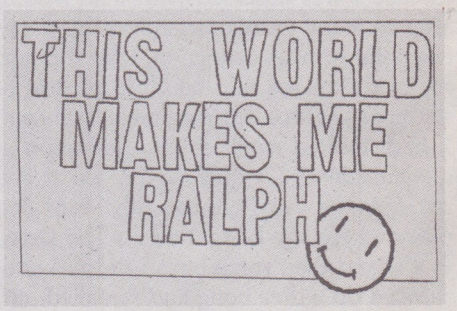


DEEP TROUBLE IN DEEP FLORIDA

The promise of lurid, titillating, or perilous adventures beyond the 27th state line was hollow, a trail of pyrite to entice back to these inane dribblings, glimmering moronically as the sun sets on another ⅛-baked idea. And while there were some instances heading down I-75 that

I grew worried we'd taken a wrong turn towards the Atlantic or perhaps the 1800s, as the dearth of orange groves and gator lairs grew ever more conspicuous, as the state's neo-Antebellum reality supplanted my Midwestern perception of statewide bacchanalia, as Tyler sweated profusely through a waking nightmare (a Bonam's Hell!, cursing himself for traveling anywhere that hits seventy degrees in October), we found the Floridian brand of hospitality largely comparable to what we experienced elsewhere in the Southeast. We arrived in Gainesville with full bladders and hours to kill, so I scored a DELTA 5 single at Arrow's Aim and ate ice cream at a little convenience store until someone arrived at Nowhere, the sprawling warehouse we played that night.

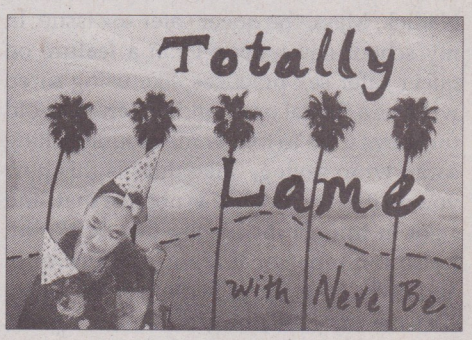
Considering how fully and intentionally I've avoided this subsect of underground music, it's worth noting how few noise acts I outright hated on this excursion. DAYDREAM, an apt moniker for such an ambient, understated affair, and the second such group we played with this tour, opened. They set up half-circle 'round an intermittently flickering light, the guitar droned on and on, punctuated by sparse percussion. The town is plagued by a certain stigma—just hearing the name conjures images of aging beardos clad in dark blue denim adorned with PBR back patches. Given that our show was just a scant few days from the town's annual gathering of schlubby DESCENDENTS fans, I was prepared for anything other than fucking ALLERGY. ALLERGY are peers and contemporaries of the almighty PIG DNA and SPETSNAZ. While the former offer a high-concept interpretation and the latter are responsible for the first true American take on the noisecore genre, the intentions of this gaggle of freaks falls nearer the puerile and obnoxious end of the spectrum—a noise life for a lit tomorrow. The vocals cackle, the guitars careen and crash, the drums keep in caveman time, and any structure seems more suggestion than mandate. The evening wound down at a swank barcade down the road where most of the show's attendees seemed to be regulars, a familiarity which enabled no small number of inebriated punkers to shout the local tribal greeting *"It's lit!"* at each other from different floors and culminated cosmically as the '90s radio hit "My Own Worst Enemy" filtered through the speakers to much applause and celebration.

If there's anywhere that props up that aforementioned misconception of Floridian bacchanalia lodged in the Midwestern unconscious, it's Miami. The city buzzes with unknown ambient energy, the sun floats high until the neon takes over. Every street, corner, nook, and cranny brims with activity, clandestine or otherwise, and continues unabated until the clubs lock up well past dawn. I'm not exactly known for my high regard of tepid bar-punk culture, so trust: Miami shakes its ass to Churchill's boogie. Even your most abysmal, Three Floyds nursing, *All Skrewed Up* enthusiast can feign freaky once a week at Delilah's senior's night, but they ain't drunk, belligerent teenager in a green body suit draped in Christmas tree lights freaky, they ain't septuagenarian ex-jazz virtuoso dry-humping a guitar flagellated by cyber-goths while hardcore pornography beams through the projector freaky; the surreal splendor provided by Churchill's is an essential component to a life fully lived.

Orlando rocks precariously in an interdimensional nexus. Disparate parallel realities jut tectonically against one another, creating a jarring patchwork of suburban banality, sultry pseudo-tropics, and good ol' southern repression, all wriggling and writhing under the auspices of the House of Mouse. This cultural landscape, coupled with the relative isolation inherent to a one-way in/one-way out kind of state, has produced some incredibly powerful outfits, namely the incestuous cohort of GROSS and FALSE PUNK. I got hip to GROSS awhile ago, and even back then I was struck by how outside of the times they sounded, a contrast only widened amidst post-CONEHEADS hysterics. Musically, they're something akin to the first COLD SWEAT LP—visceral, contentious, and rarely dwelling on an idea long enough for the listener to get a read on what comes next. The lyrics play out in a monologic call and response of existential revelation answered by a petulant "So what?" FALSE PUNK is the aural equivalent of laying your head down on an anvil to let come what will. Christian Padron, who wears sandals and does time behind the kit in both bands, is also responsible for the desperate, claustrophobic vibes of their recorded output. We were surprised to learn that the few bands that deign to make their way to Orlando are unanimous in their hatred of fun—hardly any bother to take him up on the offer to cut a live set in the back room of the GrossPunk flophouse, a grievous error that will haunt their sleepless nights in perpetuity.

Upon arriving in Tallahassee, we were warned that most of the town had called off punk on account of a bike race, though from an outsider's perspective, the gross impact seemed negligible. More so than any date on tour, the Tallahassee gig had that classic, small-town, suburban vibe reminiscent of the days we spent skating loading docks as mohawk and liberty spiked youths. The deed went down on the outdoor patio of a 24-hour coffee shop, and a crew of pubescent punkers got loose as their chaperones sipped mocha lattes and dissected Bukowski or another similarly dead, irrelevant white guy. SOFT DOM opened with some stripped down, lo-fi punk—think the GUN CLUB doing BEAT HAPPENING covers. SOFT DOM's bassist later slipped me a demo of their new band, NIGHTWITCH. The name and aesthetic heavily implied the heaviest of metal, but luckily I was treated to shambolic, primal, true freak shit, like '90s queercore stalwarts MUKILTEO FAIRIES or BEHEAD THE PROPHET NO LORD SHALL LIVE. An east coast outfit filled in the blanks, but they're not worth the textual real estate or levels of excoriation typically reserved for those RIVAL MOB hacks. Gainesville natives UV-TV rounded out the gig. Their demo on High Fashion Industries got significant Walkman attention, but that pitiful plastic slab could hardly be trusted to fully contain the power that these fuckers exhibit live. Raucous r'n'r resembling WIRE or later-era SWELL MAPS hopped up on goofballs before playing the Bronze for Buffy Summers and her pals.

Next month: BEST FOR LAST
Contact: anyonecanbethebug@gmail.com



Something I have learned in my years as a mixed black, multigender, multisexual, physically disabled punk with PTSD, chronic anxiety, and, up until very recently, mostly zero moneys, is that people will try to bully you into any binary they can, at any cost. Don't fucking let them. Walt Whitman, white and dead as he is, sees you, and you contain multitudes.

A group of white people who I also feel see me, and are thankfully not dead, is RVIVR. The way they rail against any binary that would try to put a mind or a body or a relationship in a cage has fueled me for years. At the Women/Femme/Female Identified Folks of Color Conference at University of Oregon last year, I was on a panel with my deep fam friend Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha. If you are a young punk or an aging punk and you haven't read any of her books, please correct this mistake now. *Dirty River* is her most recent, and despite some faint claims to the contrary, it is punk as fuck (follow her on brownstargirl.org). On this panel, we were asked some stuff I don't remember, but I somehow managed to work in this quote from RVIVR, "*You can love someone and just not stay friends...they just never call me, it's not like they're dead.*" NUANCE! TRUTH! BOUNDARIES and POSSIBILITY. Leah looked over at me and slow nodded.

Waiting outside the Knockout on Mission, I told Leah I was going to write about the show and her and binaries and disability and shit. And she was like, "Woah, cool, my partner has taken to calling me Worcester. When I was growing up there, I attended this second rate private school on a scholarship, and they were using moral safe education because it was the early '90s and all about family values and shit, it was like MOVE, but white. I was trying to have as many extracurriculars as possible so that I could get a scholarship to go to college and get out of there, so I was running the newspaper. I had bought or stole—I might have stolen it, I'm sorry—this *MRR* at a Newbury Comics in Nadick, Mass, the queer safer sex issue. In my school newspaper, I ran a feature on queer safer sex practices, like using saran wrap as a dental dam, and fifteen-year-old fuckboys used to follow me around licking saran wrap saying, 'Like this? Is this how you do it?' And no, it was not like that, and I got in trouble for having that *MRR*, but I also ran a personal ad in the back of it, and that's how punks in the Pioneer Valley sent me my first riot grrl zine, and yeah, *MRR*, yeah!" [In reality, she told me part this outside of the show and the details over the phone later—it was too good to go vague. The issue of *MRR* to which Leah refers is possibly *MRR* #109, June '92, The Absolutely Queer Issue, which looks so good, and it breaks my heart that it is out of print.]

We were early for the show in order to ensure that there were spaces for our lame asses to sit and surfaces to pull up to and put a drink on, and as we were going in, Leah asked the guy at the door if I could get in for free if I was writing about the show for *MRR*, and he was like "Totally, yes!" I've never tried to do that before, which is surprising, because I'm so cheap! I love to give touring bands money, though. He told me that if he opened up *MRR* and there wasn't something about the RVIVR show he was going to be upset. And there wasn't really a non-embarrassing way to say, "Dude, I could not go to a RVIVR show and not write about it, their lyrics are in my blood." So to avoid embarrassment, I put on my arrogant punk dude voice and said, "I do this all the time," and patted his be-leathered arm.

As Leah and I caught up by buying drinks, screaming about ableism, racism, relationships, and the seductive social power of the Bay over hip-hop and white people winning bingo, J Lo was screaming at giant reptiles in *Anaconda* on the screen above. Little did I know that J Lo was to be my inspiration in many ways that evening. One time, at a bodega in Bushwick, this guy who was in line with me to buy a sandwich at 3:00 am suddenly yelled, "GIRL! J Lo ain't got nothing on you!" That statement honestly moved me a lot, because J Lo rules. Could I really be capable of what she is capable?

The whole night was building up, and I didn't really know how much steam I had to let off. The past two months, as I explained to Leah, have been integrating in so many ways, affirming of who I am as a person and a body and voice in the world, and also super trying in terms of people—white people, able-bodied people, and men—asking me to prove why I deserve to have feelings about their actions. And yet I feel like myself through it all, and that's a fucking blessing. We were inside dancing to, but not "seeing," the other amazing, sexy bands Sirena Victima, Butanna (Vanessa, you are awesome and too sweet! I swear it will be less than two years the next time we talk in person, and I'll remember your cute face), and Super Unison, because saving spoons at a punk show as a disabled punk who used to let myself get utterly used in a pit has become an art. Outside trying not to smoke and smoking anyway (people who are trying to quit, in what manner do you take breaks??), Erica of RVIVR and I talked about making ourselves write every day, growing up in rural places, how *MRR* has grown in awesome ways over the past several years, and the fact that we've met in multiple disparate locations over the past half-decade without exchanging names. Inside, Leah and talked about making ourselves live every day, as usual, and finding or not finding the people with whom we can be our full selves. Leah is one of those people for me. If it were not for artists/punks like her and RVIVR (and so many more), I don't know how much I would trust myself to be me.

Or to trust myself enough to go verbal *Enough* on a dude with whom I considered friendship until he tried to invite his tongue into my mouth after he walked me home after the Halloween cover band show after I had explicitly confided in him during our conversation prior that dudes always try to walk me home and then invite themselves inside to "pee" and sleep with me. And sure enough, like a goldfish, he forgot this conversation by the time we reached my door. During the conversation which ensued at Knockout, he tried to literally debate me about the accuracy of how threatened I could possibly feel by him, including such logic as "I don't identify with masculinity, I mean I'm a bro, but..." It wasn't until I told him that someone doesn't have to identify with a particular kind of violence for their actions to be experienced as violence that I seemed to really break through. He seemed completely charmed by me, which I find infuriating, and the difficult, complex part is that, just like J Lo in a romantic comedy, and not like *Enough* at all, I am not uncharmed by him. But I'm not impressed. And cis-guys have to really impress me for me to spend a lot of time working with them. I hate misogyny, you guys. It's gotten to all of you whether you identify with that fact or not. It's gotten to me, and I'm crawling my way out.

The best part, though, is that I had a shot in one hand and a beer between my thighs the whole time. I was waving the shot around and pointing at my reluctant man student and getting a progressively thicker and thicker Jersey accent with an Oakland influence. And my sweet, sweet friends Leah and Luka were trying their damnedest to give me an out. Cigarette? Taco? Leave? Breathe? Now? The conversation didn't end super smoothly, but I think we both agreed that I was right. But binaries, right? As close as two years ago, I would not have had the guts to be both kind and harsh to someone who is a decent human being but also hurt me. It felt good. And honestly, I prefer someone outright arguing with me about whether or not they have acted in a harmful way than the passive aggressive, coded silent social

warfare that is the Bay Area's specialty.

One of the violences of binaries, in addition to how we are punished for not fitting into them, is the concept of mutual exclusivity! Intersectionality is not just a theoretical concept; it must be a way of life. If I rep one thing 100%, that doesn't leave no room for me to rep another thing just as hard. I used to think I had to choose between crazy and being okay, being a boy and being a girl, being Black and being mixed race, being queer and liking people of more than one gender, including men, being radically disabled and being a punk, being in pain and being tough, being working class and liking critical theory, being a writer and a dancer, being someone who cares about kids and being a sex worker. But I don't. I fucking don't have to choose and also I can choose it all. And so can you.

RVIVR's set was so tight and it was absolutely worth it to save up my energy to crawl through the crowd to the front for them. I feel like they get better every show, so we'll see how Oakland on the 16th feels! I'm usually a fan of stage banter, so it always surprises me how much I love it when a band pulls out these seamless transitions from song to song. I was not hurt by a single guitar solo. There was all kinds of dignified enthusiasm and conspiratorial eye contact. The catchiest hooks in pop-ish punk without losing one ounce of depth or lyricism, I don't even know. I don't stop being impressed. I'm ready for new music! It's been a year and a half! Haha. But I'm always ready for the old, too. RVIVR means a lot to a lot of punks and to a significant number of queers who either reluctantly allow themselves to be called punks or vehemently don't, but either way I enjoy little phenomena, and I think they're pretty special. Thanks again for helping me feel like myself.

Inaccessibility Shoutout: The Knockout is listed as wheelchair accessible, but it is not. I could roll into the bar, but immediately to the left is the bar and to the immediate right is a step which brings you up to the area where a couple tables, a photobooth, stage, and standing area are. Straight to the back of the bar and to the right and left are bathrooms. There is a step to get up to the bathroom, which has grab bars inside, but is way way too narrow for a chair to fit inside. Once inside the bathroom and on the toilet, anyone sitting down is far too short to reach the toilet paper, which is mounted three feet above the grab bars, unless one has cool super long arms. I think that a big problem in how spaces decide whether to describe themselves as accessible is that access is mounted on a binary. Something is either accessible or it is not. This is not true. There are multiple aspects of accessibility which impact different kinds of people in different ways. As Sean and I raved on and on about in our conversation about his project, Is This Venue Accessible?, it's awesome to be descriptive. If your entrance is wheelchair accessible, say so. If the rest is not, describe that.

Accessibility Shoutout: As a tip, Taqueria Cancun, nearby, has a wheelchair accessible (with door button) entrance and bathroom.

ENDNOTES: I saw RVIVR again on the 16th in Oakland at the Metro. The Metro gets my sitting wheelchair accessibility shoutout forever. The song "Hunger Suite 1. Go Away" hit me so hard and gave me wet eyes. It's so funny how I don't hear people talking about chronic pain and disability even when it's so clear that they might be. I had heard and loved that song so many times, and despite the myriad ways I could have related to the song as someone with a complicated bodily experience, I had never fully understood that it could be a song for me as a disabled person who lives with pain and difficulty and an unpredictable body. There is something about the lines, *"I'm not gonna give today the day, cuz the pain is never gonna go away"* to *"I can't leave these bones, woah I don't think so!"* that is most deeply posi punk and yet the most realistic thing I've ever heard. I love my fucking disabled body. And I love RVIVR even more now, if that was possible. There's a tattoo on my multi-broken ankle in the works.

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I'm out of work again and trying to give myself assignments to keep myself busy before I start working. I'm going to perfect drawing a cat. Mozart is going on tour to the Northwest, and I'm getting out of the van to stay in Olympia where gSp will remember old songs and write new ones. But really, I'm mainly feeling kind of blank and unmotivated. What feels good? How do you create new things? I was thinking about the connections between art and obsessive behaviors, how a lot of art is riffing on an obsession. I realize I'm not really obsessed with anything and haven't really been in a while. How do I find that new obsession? I lost my job and took a couple months to do a bunch of art shit. Then I got bored, so I found a job. I started working and it burned me out real quick and blanked out my brain. The Blues went on tour in the midst of me having a grownup job. It was so good, and I felt like a real person again and my mind was churning and ready. Then I went back to work and blanked out again. I got bland. I understood cable and white wine.

I was sitting here trying to write this, sitting in my room totally blocked and blasting early Metallica in an attempt to get good at riffing again. I had this moment where I realized I was forcing something that wasn't going to happen, and I should probably do something else. I was feeling a total lack of nostalgic feelings, which is always the best time to get rid of everything. The ubiquity of free boxes at houses I've lived at and frequented means that in reality a lot of things I'm shoveling out of my room are just returning to their origin. Pants that were cool looking but I can't get past my thighs, or a shirt that has managed to circulate from free box to free box across Oakland, across the West Coast, across the world. Punk has a desire to be ephemeral in some ways, but I know that belt has been making its way around everyone for at least ten years now. Throwing stuff away is capitalist—every part should be used. A desire to be anti-nostalgia, but then we talk about the good old days when what we did was secret or dangerous. Or even better, the old "You're not doing anything new, I got naked and covered myself in fake blood while screaming about oppression twenty years ago." Property is theft, but you got that from the free box at Huffin? How did you get that there, that's mine! I didn't put it in the free box. Or what about a show of hands of how many people have accidentally put their bag down in the free box and "bye-bye…"

The scenes or eras that we remember best are the ones that had people taking pictures of everyone or filming bands or at least one person with the money and their shit together enough to put out an

LP. On the opposite end, we recall times that lack documentation in a battle for the most cred. But again, what we do is secret, right? Is art not valid until someone else documents it? Or others acknowledge it? I keep drawing pictures of cats that maybe no one will ever see, and maybe it wastes paper, but it's a more interesting time and somehow feels more worthwhile than watching TV on the internet. Don't tell me what to do and I won't tell you. The rule is no rules.

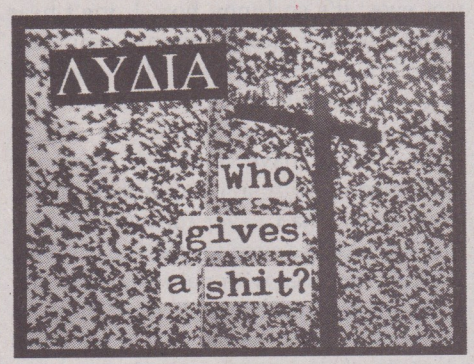
What I'm trying to get to is the weird battle of documentation and ephemeral existence. Do we document what is secret? For a lot of us, our default existence is playing in bands, or at the very least going to shows. Those things happen and end and then only exist in people's memories. Was someone filming it? Recording it? Taking pictures? Did you make a zine about your memories later?

An old band of mine played a show that was pretty whatever—it was all day and featured, like, ten bands, but really it was all the same people and bands that went to this same queer punk night. Somebody filmed it and interviewed some of the bands (including yours truly). This was nearly ten years ago. I was eating a salad with an old friend yesterday, and he was saying that they were making a documentary about that show. The show was so unnotable that no one would even think of it as special or important except for the fact that someone filmed it. It really only functions as this tiny picture of one show in a tiny corner of queer punk in San Francisco in 2008. It seems weird to me, or maybe even ridiculous, to create a documentary about such a blip of nothing. Far more interesting things happened in that scene at that time. Who am I to decide? It does stand as a demonstration of how many things seem "game changing" just because an audience member had a camera. Is it cool? Is it stupid? I guess if it gets someone out there excited about something, feeling something, inspired to do something, then it's pretty cool.

I was thinking about artists (photographers, videographers, writers, visual artists) in punk scenes and how they exist in the midst of all of this. People who make the ephemeral permanent. But then there are all of these places where maybe there's a person who takes pictures but doesn't dig taking live shit of bands, or video artists who are just making the deep weird shit, or writers who aren't necessarily into documenting things, or there are simply no people who indulge in these forms at all. Art (outside of playing guitar) is sometimes looked down upon as being bourgeois or rich. There was a time some kid I didn't recognize was taking pictures of my band as we played. He was in my face with his fucking flash, and I tried to punch him in the face. He was baffled because he took pictures for a big-whoop fakey underground zine, and didn't I want my band to blow up? He could do that for us!

Uff, fuck off.

Art acts as history and documentation. This is cool, but it can create a weird hierarchy where the well-documented things seem more important than the undocumented. If a situation doesn't have a documentarian or if documenting is not possible, or even dangerous, are these instances less important? Do they not exist?



Let's Dance for Fear Tonight Is All

I've just boarded a delayed flight to Athens, Greece. I spent the last six days in London. Though technically my second home, I still feel like a bit of a tourist there: navigating (and getting lost on) the chaotic transit system, getting excited with squirrels, eating hot cross buns and crumpets. What a cliché, I know. I landed early in the morning, got to my cousin's, had some tea, and caught up. That same evening I went to the South London Gallery to see Luke Younger (AKA Helm) perform a wall-shuddering live set in tandem with expressive improv dance performances by Alice Mackenzie and Fernanda Munoz-Newsome. It was a great night. Luke's a highly active sound artist (among other things), always doing some interesting collaboration or project, ALTER label release (*alterstock.blogspot.com*), show, Yelp! review, you name it. He's touring right now with Drew McDowall of Coil, and I'm excited to see him in a few weeks in London, where he will be doing a set at the release event of the revised and expanded edition of the seminal book on the English experimental / esoteric underground by David Keenan, *England's Hidden Reverse*. Coil, Current 93, Nurse with Wound fans, check it out!

My time in London went by so fast, I can't believe I'm still standing from all the wine and late nights—though to be fair, I'm sprawled out on the couch right now. I went to All Ages Records in Camden town (thanks for distro-ing *MRR*!), LVEUM HQ in Hackney (*loads* of good releases on the way!) and Powerlunches showspace for its last show! I'm glad I got to witness the happy mayhem of that "loveable shithole," as someone put it. I met thee Bryony Beynon in person after four years of long-distance communication, got to hang out with the peña again (hola Nuria, Paco, Paula, Guillem, Tom), met up with more fantastic people (cheers Simon, Frank, Joseph, Louis, Lauren, #chrissbresswickedreggae) and also met the man behind the hashtag and occasional *MRR* contributor, #joebriggs. He does a zine called *Brutalist Shimmy* (back page reads in huge letters STAY PUNK OR DON'T) with reviews, interviews, and punk banter, and also co-hosts a bizarrely fun punk podcast called *Full Throttle Lazy*, and you can check it out at mixcloud.com/fullthrottlelazy. I got food high with Indian, Ethiopian, Italian, and Turkish food, drunk on conversation and molecular cocktails in underground speakeasy bars that looked like war bunkers, almost burned down Rochester Castle after hella cheap V&Ts, and found the most delicious samosas in Brick Lane. I wiggled in my seat with happiness at the new *Star Wars* movie (at Rio Cinema in Hackney, one of the oldest cinemas in London!) and, in between all that, spent some much needed time with my family!

I've been on the road for about eighteen days now, and even though I am looking forward to a few days of rest at home, I couldn't help myself and decided to go to Barcelona for New Year's Eve! Everything is so close in Europe and flights are *cheap*—it's mental, ugh, I love it! "Here are we, one magical moment, such is the stuff from where dreams are woven." On the 30th of December is the show of the season: Una Bèstia Incontrolable, Barcelona, Piñen, Chroma, Maquina Muerta, Vértigo, and Arrest, Nueva Fuerza in solidarity with the Transformadors squat (csoatransformadors.wordpress.com). Now if only Ciudad Lineal would get added to that show, I could truly die a happy woman before the year is out. I've not yet been to BCN, but the prospect

of spending NYE with a bunch of mates in a new city I've been dying to go to for years is heavenly. But first, gotta surprise my parents for the holidays. Maybe even get some sleep?...Nah, I'll sleep when I'm dead.

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OK, the show was just fantastic! It started early, and between the two "stages" that had been set up, the bands rotated with but a few minutes break between them! Somehow that made drinking go faster, too? There was a crew from London attending the show, and I already had a good number of friends there whom I hadn't seen in ages, so it really felt like the best kind of reunion! Not to mention all the rad people I met there—really some of the nicest punks! My friend Laura from Rakta has been living there for a couple years now and plays bass in a new post-punk band called Chroma with Rebe from Las Otras on guitar and vocals and Amy from Siega on drums. Their new LP has just dropped from Hysteria Records and, by the time you read this, some of you will have seen them live at the *MRR* festival or one of their other US tour shows! Máquina Muerta, from Mallorca, also just dropped a split LP with DHK from Peru, and it's so bloody killer—I got it fresh off the silk-screen press and have been jamming it every other day since! I've liked both bands from their beginnings, so I'm thrilled they're on the same piece of wax. I got to hang out and chat with all of them and damn if they're not just the nicest chaps—and their set was just flooring, of course! It was great to catch up with and sing along to UBI, always a good time, and seeing Arrest for the first time was great! I reviewed their EP and liked every song, and they're just as fun live! Piñen are a two-piece powerhouse, gutsy and primitive, and Barcelona set the place on fire, everyone singing along, fists in the air! Every band delivered a great set, the energy in the room was festive, and the party continued for hours afterwards! "It's not the side-effects of the cocaine, I'm thinking that it must be love."

So, three days in and I'm loving Barcelona. *Es mui bonita!* It's absolutely gorgeous, the architecture is breathtaking, the parks are huge, the people are nice, the wine is divine, and the punk scene is booming! There are castles downtown, hidden *plaças* around cobble-stoned corners, and the beach at the end of Les Rambles, the famous street that stretches from Plaça de Catalunya to the Mediterranean Sea. There are hills for panoramic sights and caves for adventurous nights. I saw Gaudi buildings on every other corner and marveled at the modernist and art deco and nouveau touches that colored the city's downtown area. I started to recognize the difference between Castillian and Catalan spelling and used the little elementary Spanish I've picked up from friends and from listening to Spanish punk (*Quiero un café con leche por favor, quiero bailar con ti, quiero ser tu perra, etc.)* Guess my DIY Spanish classes, i.e. listening to Spanish punk and reading the lyrics, paid off after all. I also discovered the pleasures of *carajillo* coffee, Moroccan food, Ribera del Duero wine, and had so much fun walking around, drinking on the street (oh happiness!), and gushing at how pretty everything was that I would actually consider moving there one day. A big thank you to Laura, Hector, Ian and Nagore, who showed me around and shared their knowledge of the city with me; Nani and Carlos, Dana and Emmanuel, Paco and Guillem, who fed me delicious olives, clams, paella, *tostadas,* and *porro*; all the punks who helped and played the show, making it an incredible night to remember; and, last but not least, to Ian for letting me crash on his couch while he was nursing a cold and an ill partner! *Estoy totalmente enamorada*!

***

I've been home for about a month now. I've left the house about half a dozen times, and I am getting about five hours of sleep a day. It's 4:00 am right now, and I'm listening to a Japanese ambient noise show on NTS Radio. I've been listening to a lot of it lately after getting turned onto it by Luke Younger (Helm, Lowest Form, ALTER Records) and Bill Kouligas (PAN Records) who both have shows there. Radio has actually been a theme as of late. Aside from the show I "cameo-d" on at ShequalizingXDistort in December, I was also interviewed by Steph of EXD. You can hear that two-hour (!) chat we had where I talked about how I got into punk and the Greek punk scene, my time at *MRR*, a bit about how the mag operates, and more at obsessionism.wordpress.com/2016/01/31/equalizingxdistort-radio. I also just spent all day recording my second "radio show" podcast (ugh, what a wretched word). I thought "fuck it, why not?" I love doing the radio and not doing enough of it is something I kinda regret while at *MRR* with its vastly fascinating record collection. It's a way to spread the love! You can hear those at obsessionism.wordpress.com/category/radio. I've also been transcribing and sending out questions for half a dozen interviews, working on setting up a new website from scratch as mine was hacked (fuck you very much hugedomains.com), and working on a gazillion job applications—coz yeh, real world! I've been to the old Kataramenο Syndromo basement, which is now run by a different collective, and it was quite a weird feeling to be there after four years. Being in Athens is surreal, to say the least, and even though it's nice to be back for a bit, the main reason I am here is to get my mind together and set up my plan for whatever is to come next. I don't engage much with the outside world, have rung up only the closest of friends, and do little that keeps me too long from my to-do list that's so fucking long but exciting. Of course I've been listening to the whole Bowie discography and been reading an old copy of *Stardust* I unearthed from my old flat. When I can, I study the three books I brought with me on Balkan history (*Balkan Ghosts,* Robert D. Kaplan), the Greek student movement during the "long 1960s" (*Children of the Resistance,* Kostis Kornetis), and a new book that came out on the Greek punk scene from 1979-2015 (!), a whopping 600+ pages! (*Κοινωνικά Απόβλητα,* Yiannis N. Kolovos) Maybe more about that last one at a future date.

Jetlag has put me in a weird night-owl cycle of existence, but I don't mind working late at night when it's quiet and I can hear nothing but my thoughts and the rain outside. "Got to keep searching and searching, oh what will I be believing, and who will connect me with love?" You'll hear from me soon again, "*óyeme como quien oye llover.*"

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A screaming comes across the headphone. It's all about the razzmatazz, the sonic reanimation of the destructive force of an avalanche or the donating cavalcade of a tidal wave that imposes balled junk on the shores (punk beach). Trash is everywhere, but I trudge slowly and amaze on the fractions, letting them gather together

in my exhausted mind. Hardcore is a primitive form of self-expression, but since it's about humans and not nature or spiritualism, its topic will be always difficult and entertaining to crack. All hail intimidating-core and confusion-wave, urgent punx with high energy and low budget. What could a heart take?

Mine has been damaged by the tragic news of Deformity's break up. They were a band that sounded loose. The live-like hectic pace made their records feel like they were happening in real-time every time I played them, not like something recorded, static, sealed, archived but physical, instant madness. They captured the hurry-scurry approach of Discharge and Art Brut hardcore, added some dangerous rock'n'roll, and made their own distracted world sound like field recordings from desperate rooms. I would really love to hear an LP from them, but unfortunately they called it a day and Shiva went on to form Kaleidoscope.

I spent several nights listening through the Kaleidoscope *Volume One* demos and loved the sample-heavy sound juggling, rotating several strange ideas to form one toxic soundscape. Self-exile into a loud nook where, within this wild space, unschooled enthusiastic free jazz roulades are terribly banged out, meeting up with barfed-up vomit spit guitar notes; scribbles all over the sheet music; they are continued with retro-imagination-of-the-future machinery sounds, reminding me of the second Mekons LP's strange and bizarrely humming futurism fetish. But even these machinery squeaks are mixed with acid-shaped freak vibe riff orgy. Shiva has the same hackery here that makes punk music sound alive under his hands. But the freshly released EP sounds more homogeneous with mostly psych-guitar jams holding together speed-freak tempos and the off-beat minimalist pounding—less sample, more volume. The result is that the record expands beyond a format, a time-span, and even the room where it was recorded or written. It drafts a neighborhood, a city, a personal environment that is soaked up to all rhythm. American hardcore tends to bore me these days, but sounds like Shiva's are so universal I don't care about geographic locations and passports.

Another great example of American hardcore is Nasti. I don't really get why all the songs have to start with feedback since the music itself is dissonant and frustratingly disciplined enough to be recognizable even without pre-warnings. The sounds clash within this demo as if the band was conducting traffic accidents. The dust from the wreckage sprinkles enough dirt over their noise-rock-ish riffs. Still, the record sounds polished as the chaos (if any) happens in the frame, which is fine by me. This is mechanic and crafted distortion where noise backs up the music, not stabs it in the back. Take Gai's *Extermination* EP, which seemingly starts with feedback. Only a few seconds later it is revealed that what we hear is not only noise but the actual riff, noise formed to some mutated rhythm. In the case of Nasti, feedback warns but does not collaborate, which makes it mostly a false alarm. I remember that *My War*'s B-side was cited as a main influence on the late-'00s American hardcore movement, and it can still be heard in the tempos and the riff-based structure of the songs of Nasti. There are many build-ups and messings around with tension. It's a very rhythm-based record, thus it's the best when it dares to try to beat me into the ground.

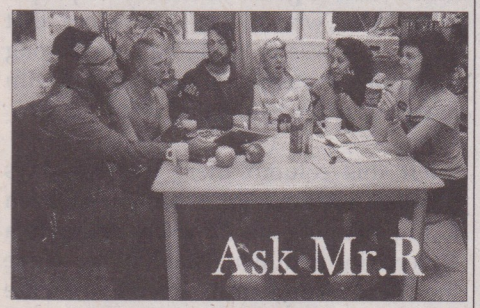
Latishia's Skull Drawing is another cool band from the USA who put out a demo not that long ago. Ex-members of Cult Ritual and Salvation play damaging, tight, mid-tempo, heavy hardcore without any parts that would make anyone bust out official hardcore moves. They are not dissonant, but forceful, and they use their music to harm, since the music itself only gets damaged when it's bashed into the target of its players. I like it when music is used as a tool, when it sounds like the purpose that it fulfils demands the music's meaning. When a band is brave enough to use music to work with it and within this work they let it tell a story instead of them anxiously guarding sounds. Kids will have their say; music will have its say as well. Dumb people can make great music that tells us interesting things.

I tend to wonder why I almost exclusively listen to melodic music sung in English and why have I started to find it bleak when hardcore bands from the English-speaking terrains try to be noisy, confused, and lethargic. I guess it should be related to understanding the story that melody tells since melody is joy and joy could be awkward in a foreign language. It should be similar to smiling in public—everyone thinks it's strange, so does anyone who smiles among strangers without context, but melody clicked to English language is understandable just as a comedy that is watched by a theater crowd. Or sorrow—even without understanding, it is accepted, its detail doesn't need to be articulated. But madness and confusion are not accepted, they are feared, as its entire nuance is frightening. Because madness is irrational, we can't understand it with a rational mind, thus even when English-speaking bands are truly confused they sound great when they try not to explain their confusion but play it out. Confuse's "Stupid Life" is sung in English, but it's still just as hard for me to figure out what they want to say with their music as it is to know what Ikka Shinjyuu wanted with any of their records, but this work of spying frustration out is entertaining. As *Activity*, the board game, most of the time seems more interesting than sentences. Now I want to make my sentences read like activity.

I have written about how European bands mostly fail when they abandon their inner confusion and try to recreate American or British sounds. This should be another task of mine to find contemporary great bands from over-looked areas of the world. As for now, already broken up Scandi-core is taking up a great amount of my headspace. The resonance is brilliant. Norwegian Betong Hysteria blends sheer aggression with all-of-a-sudden beaming guitar crawls even though with this confliction the overall sound creates an atmosphere of being pushed into a gripping plastic bag that is losing air—then the struggle begins. It's a perfect after-work jam while racing home on a falling apart bus through a desolate land of rotting blocks of flats. On my way to work I like to listen to Sorto from Finland, a roiling, sludgy mess while they scurry through their songs. Their lo-fi riffing anxiety would, and probably should, be envied by basement black metalists. They also sound percussive, but here the guitars make a primitive beat, like the sound of coppers being smashed against each other. Such harmonic minimalism fits perfectly with the low-key production of their super noisy record. Today it would probably sound very terrible, as it was slayed on a sound board as a prey for polite-heaviness. Order the back catalogue of *MRR* and study through Basement Screams, find out what you want, and record it for yourself, and don't let them murder your sound.

I'm lucky to have this column so I don't have to say Kansanturvamusiikkikomissio's name out loud in order to talk about them. It's Die Kreuzen / Tar Babies type of craziness—loud, distorted, free-form hardcore. Not their reinvention, but the capturing of the same cosmic confusion and adding an interesting bass-drum coalition that takes the lead with a bit of rockabilly rhythm

to the whole sound, pushing the guitar sideways where it is gifted enough space to do whatever it feels like squeezing out. The same confusion is caught in a more concentrated form by Tatuerade Snuskukar from Sweden who are more liquidly unstable on the rhythm section, laying down sloppy D-beat-close drums while the more crystallized guitars cut their way through this scary, greasy, cacophonic environment, all locked inside the haunting howls of the vocals, an exhausted, soul-wrecking sound. The recipe sounds way too easy for anyone to be this perfect when trying to do their mind-messing hardcore guerilla attack. Everyone should figure out their own.



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though, a column for people who are intrigued by subtle differences between the "punx" and the "punks."*

It's cold in my house and I would love to think about something else. Scandalize me. Text a question to 510-585-HELP (510-585-4357)! Or *send a regular assed email to askmrr@mail.com. If you are sending a question that is time sensitive, let me know so that I can get you a timely response!*

A few months back, I was confronted by someone at a gig for wearing a death's head (totenkopf) badge on my vest. This individual asked me why I was wearing such a symbol and mentioned that it is unwelcome at that space. I complied and told them that I would reconsider my choices in badges and was only respectful to said individual. I also understood I was in a space that I do not decide the rules in. However, I did defend myself in claiming that I was and am not tolerant of any hatred. I said that the totenkopf is simply a cool skull, but I also acknowledged the historical significance and how it was appropriated via the Third Reich. ,My question is this: why are people/artists and others use the Swastika rune and other Nazi/Third Reich imagery ((Motörhead, Slayer, LA's Overkill, Seditionaries, chAos armbands) supported and loved by those who oppose the adornment of said symbols?

Oh yeah, I understand the confusion here. Like most subcultures of rebellion, we've always had our fashions of shit, piss, death, and disease. Pretty much anything that counts as a societal fear looks wonderful on us. Give me a messed up sounding word that would look good pointy and someone'll call their band that. It's a thing. Use a turd as a headband? Sure. Fuck you, everybody.

So obviously the skull and crossbones has always been a pretty easy and well-accepted form of outfit decoration on all levels of punk culture and etcetera cultures as well. From metalheads and bikers to Pyrate Punks and whoever is buying those skull-with-a-bow-on-its-head Hot Topic accessories along with their Total Chaos vinyl or whatever it is, they've always been basically everywhere. Upside down crosses are the same way. Most punks adorning clothes and records and their offices at work and blah blah blah else with upside down crosses aren't generally actual *satanists* who have a problem with whatever it is the Bible is about—they're generally punks who think organized religion is stupid and that upside down crosses look cool. It's theoretically the same thing for the bands you mention. Lemmy talks in his autobiography about being fascinated with the Nazi era and its symbolism but denies any actual prejudices. Sonny Barger, founder of the Oakland chapter of the Hells Angels, says the same in his autobiography about the Nazi affiliated designs used on their patches early on. He talks about how the Hells Angels weren't actually a racist club but ended up attracting a lot of racists. By 2000, he had said in an interview, "The club, as a whole, is not racist, but we probably have enough racist members that no Black guy is going to get in it."

I guess what I'm trying to say is that traditionally any fucked up and dark image has been an acceptable symbol to shock and disgust our suburban society, and a lot of times we do allow an older generation of punks/rockers/metalheads, etc. to get away with continuing their old rules of rebellion, but you are right in wondering why. We should be careful of who we allow to be our heroes. Being punks in this day and age is a very different counterculture than it was for punks of previous generations because our culture is very different than it used to be and we *counter* it differently. We've had the opportunity to witness how this racist symbolism leads to racist comfort/membership in our communities and the alienation of our friends and fellow punks. Our current culture is just now taking a step away from celebrating rich celebrities behaving badly and people telling it "like it is." Technology makes it way easier for everyone to witness the violence and biases of police and other people in power on a massive scale, and as punks this is what we are working to counter. We don't really need to show society its gruesome underbelly anymore. That's its most prominent part. It is definitely time to start taking stock of our intentions as well as of the impacts we create via the symbols we choose to wear, the bands we choose to listen to, and the people we lift up in our scenes.

I didn't April Fools you guys! Hope that's cool. Don't be bummed. Send me a question to answer if you wanna, though. Who's down with OPP? I'm down with OPP (Other People's Problems). Text 510-585-HELP. Email: askmrr@mail.com.

i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

Man, writing obituaries is the worst. How do you reduce the life of somebody you cared about down to a few paragraphs?—I mean, who among us can be boiled down to a couple hundred (or even a couple thousand) words, right? On top of that, you don't want to just write about your own experiences with the person who died, making their death all about you; but you also don't want to just write up this impersonal thing about their life which aspires to a blatantly false feeling of objectivity, ignoring your own relationship with them. And you don't want to talk shit, but you also don't want to paint a picture of a rose with the thorns Photoshopped off, right? And maybe the most fucked up thing you could do would be to write a super meta deconstruction of the idea of obituaries that makes someone's death

into a meditation on your own neuroses about communication.

Plus, it sucks that people die at all.

This is not really an obituary, although my friend Bryn killed herself a little less than a month ago. What do you even say about that? "It fucked me up?" It did. "What a loss?" It was. "I always thought I'd see her next time I was in town?" I did. All these platitudes, the predictable things we always say when people die—they're all true. But their profundity gets lost in the repetition—and even that is a sentiment that's been repeated to uselessness.

Bryn's memorial is in New York City this weekend. I'm leaving tomorrow. By the time you read this, it will already have happened, but right now I'm still working out the logistics: I'm riding down to New York with Kelly and Alyssa, I'm staying with Dana and Jess, Alex is coming down with Fisher and Geyl on Saturday, a fucking ton of people—mostly trans women—who have been part of my life for the last ten or fifteen years will be coming to New York from far away, too, and I wonder where they're going to be, who I'm going to see, whether I'm going to get any sleep, how I'm going to function. I don't know what I'm going to wear yet, although luckily I have a lot of black clothes. I probably need to do laundry before I leave.

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I've been crying in the mornings while I drive into work. We're in this house for the winter, which is further from work than we used to live, which means I drive about an hour each way to work right now, which means I listen to podcasts or audiobooks for two hours every day until my mind is racing too fast to follow what people are saying and I turn them off to listen to music. And I don't know about you, but I am pretty emotionally closed off. I am not great at feeling things. You know how teenagers are always like "music is my life?" I think that's often because listening to music is a way to feel relatively uncomplicated emotions at a time in your life when you're really overwhelmed by the complexity of *everything*, and I think maybe I never really got over that. I listen to G.L.O.S.S. and I feel powerful; I listen to the Bouncing Souls to feel nostalgic or hopeful; I listen to Ragana to feel vulnerable. You probably do this thing, too, or maybe it's different for you. But I don't know what band to listen to—what to do at all—to grieve.

I don't think I have PTSD or any specific trauma that you'd diagnose with a DSM (now that being trans is only in there in a half-assed way), but a childhood and adolescence (and let's be real, entire lifetime) of picking up on cues from everywhere that I couldn't let myself exist unselfconsciously means that I tend to automatically shut myself down from feeling things before I even feel them, and I guess from the outside this looks a lot like being an even-keeled, reasonable adult—my friend Red was just saying that it's funny to imagine me having a full-on temper tantrum, which I guess is true; I was like, "Yeah, I just get stiller and stiller until I disappear"—but from the inside it tends to look like wanting to watch horror movies all the time, wanting to listen to stupid metal or abrasive crust stuff all the time because those enormous, blatant, broad-stroke emotional provocations often feel like the only things that can really get through to me. I like to feel things, but I'm bad at it. Fucking sue me, but I'm from New Jersey, so I like the first couple Gaslight Anthem albums and recently on my way into work I've been finding myself getting choked up and teary singing along to the Gaslight Anthem song about the kid who dies too young in a car crash or the ones about wanting more from life or whatever yearning bullshit it is that we get choked up about when we are from New Jersey and we listen to the bands from New Jersey that make us feel it and the funny thing, for me, is just how alienated from my own emotional landscape I am.

The funny thing is that I've been *surprised* to find myself crying.

I guess the other funny thing is that once I find myself crying I'm usually so relieved to be feeling such a clear sad feeling—an uncomplicated feeling—that relief eclipses sadness and my eyes dry up immediately.

I kind of wish I knew how to grieve properly. I mean, I know there isn't a proper way to grieve, that it's messy for everyone, but I feel like I've just been walking around feeling fucked up in broad strokes without being able to name anything more specific than that.

The word might just be "sad."

Anyway, so I'm headed down to New York tomorrow, and I'm thinking about all these people—mostly trans women—who I'm going to see, who I never get to see, most of whom I used to see once or twice a year at Camp Trans or at the Trans Health Conference in Philadelphia when I used to go to those kinds of things more often, and I'm feeling *desperate* for community. I'm feeling so heartbroken that Bryn killed herself and at the same time I'm feeling so relieved that I'm going to see all these people who, honestly? Will understand this.

This stuff I'm talking about—the inability to feel feelings directly, the frustrated wish to have more access to one's own feelings, the ability to articulate the shit out of these things without having the ability to just fucking sit there with it and feel it—is classic trans girl stuff. This is stuff that I *know* that people I'm going to see this weekend are going to understand—stuff I know that they've been going through, too. I'm feeling so much relief to get to be with these people who I love, who I wish I saw more, that I wish this was going to be a week-long memorial instead of one night with hangouts a day before and after.

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I left this column there for two days because I couldn't figure out how to finish it. I'm still not sure. Now I'm sitting in a Panera in midtown Manhattan where the internet connection doesn't work, the column is a day late, and I'm trying to figure out some perfect Bryn story to tell you so you can know what she was like or something. But I can't pick a story to tell you, and the more I think about it, the more I'm not sure that I even really know what she was like—which sounds sadder than it probably is. Or maybe differently sad. I mean, I could probably say the same about myself. What am I like? What story from my life could I tell you so you'd know what I'm like?

Trans girls, dude. We are so fucking difficult to get close to. A lot of the dirtbag and dirtbag spectrum trans women I know, as well as other people who knew Bryn, but especially the trans women, have been talking a lot since Bryn died about how bad we've been at being in touch. How now that the Trans Health Conference stopped being worth it years ago and Camp Trans doesn't exist any more, how we never see each other, and how we care about each other a lot but we're bad at manifesting that. We've been trying to figure out how to be better at it. One of the ironies of this memorial is how excited so many of us are for the rare opportunity to see each other and how shitty so many of us feel for feeling excitement as a component of our grief. I'm not sure how to parse it out for you more clearly than that.

One year at the Trans Health Conference,

I needed to go buy foundation. That is the kind of thing that Bryn was always good at: she did hair and makeup and stuff professionally, was always the one who'd make us look less fucked up for things like the Lambda Literary Awards or whatever. So I was like, I'm going to drag Bryn to the drugstore to help me pick out a new kind of foundation that is going to improve my satisfaction with my life by, like, a *lot*. So she came with me and I was like "What should I get" and she was like "I don't know, get what you usually get," and I was bummed because I had wanted her wisdom to solve my life, but then as we were walking back to the convention center, she was like, "Uh, this might be fucked up or problematic or not PC or whatever, but can I just say that your tits look really good?"

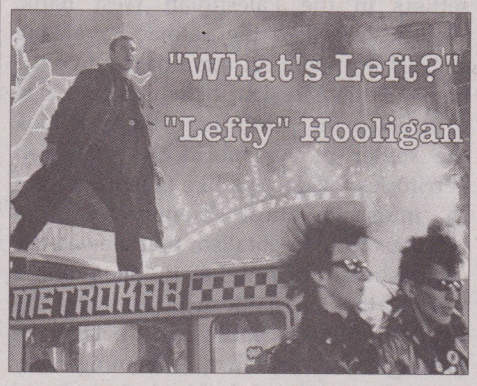
And I was like, "Shit, Bryn, so do yours! I've just been afraid it would be fucked up to say something!"

I think we had probably both been sharing a lot of cleavage with the world all weekend.

She was like, "Yeah it's weird, it's almost like taking your hormones regularly was a good idea with actual results."

I'm not sure why I keep coming back to this story. It's probably a story that says something about me and it probably says something about Bryn, too. Alyssa said there was a really memorable time that Bryn complimented her tits, too, but that's not really my story to tell you. I kind of also want to tell you about the conversation me and Alyssa had last night about the powerful hilarious impression that the picture of Bryn in the uterus costume made on us like a decade and a half ago and about how important Bryn's Livejournal was to me at the time in my life when Livejournal was the most important thing in the world or about the time me and Alex had our gay not-wedding/nonmonogarriage, and I was too alienated from myself to have any idea how I wanted to look for it, so I asked Bryn to basically tell me what to do, and she was like, "I'm really into early '90s Madonna in *Truth or Dare*—how about a long high ponytail column of fake blonde hair?" and I was like, "Okay, sure," and how good/bad that idea was.

But even if I told you all the stories I could think of, they probably wouldn't be enough to do what I want them to do. And anyway? Bryn was a writer. She wrote her own stories. They're online and in print now and they'll disappear, over time, the way all our stories will blink out and fade away. You don't need me to tell you. We're lucky: she already told us who she was and what she was like.



"Save me from this road I'm on
Oh, Jesus take the wheel"
—Carrie Underwood
"Jesus, Take the Wheel," *Some Hearts* (2005)

Stan was my friend in high school. His mom went through an ugly divorce, got a little crazy, and joined a pentecostal Assemblies of God church when I was a sophomore. We made fun of her—speaking in tongues, full immersion water baptism, miraculous healing through prayer—but I admit I was a little freaked out by her beliefs at the time. Having been raised most of my life in southern California, I had a learner's permit at fifteen, a driver's license at seventeen, and my first car as soon as I could manage. But throughout my high school years, I was dependent on the kindness of parents to give me and my friends rides to and from places and events. Well, Stan's mom had a bumper sticker on her car that read: "WARNING: In the event of Rapture, this car will be unmanned."

It wasn't that I was upset about her belief that "the church" would be physically snatched away from this world by a wrathful god in the "end times." I just couldn't understand how an otherwise caring and loving mother would be okay with being raptured out of the moving vehicle she was driving with her children and their friends still in the car. I mean, potentially at least, wasn't that religiously inspired child neglect? I got another clue to her cognitive dissonance in 1968, the year the federal government made seat belts mandatory. She had a beat-up 1960 Olds 88 four-door sedan without seat belts from the divorce settlement, and concerns were raised by the other parents that her vehicle wasn't safe enough for the transport of the adolescents in her care. She was apologetic that she couldn't afford to install proper safety belts because her ex reneged on the child support. "We are all in the hands of our Lord," she would say. "His eye is even on the tiny sparrow."

To say there's a lot of evangelical end-of-days apocalypticism in this country is an understatement. Forty-one percent of American adults believe we're in the end times. Seventy-seven percent of Evangelicals and 54% of Protestants concur that "the world is currently living in the 'end times' as described by prophecies in the Bible." Forty-five percent of practicing Catholics say the end times have arrived. These are the results of a 2013 OmniPoll conducted by James F. Fitzgerald, who also found that 54% of Blacks, 48% of Hispanics, 39% of whites, 46% of married adults, and 47% of parents say the world is in the end times. According to a contrasting 2012 Reuters poll, something like 22% of Americans believe the world is going to end in their lifetime. Either way, there are a fuck of a lot of people in this country who are convinced the world is coming to an end, and soon.

I'm not here to parse out the various and confusing elements of Christian eschatology—Resurrection, Rapture, Tribulation, Second Coming, Millennium, Last Judgment, etc. Nor am I interested in discussing the niceties of Christian Zionism versus Christian Dominionism versus Christian Identity ad nauseam. With anywhere from a quarter to a half of the US population buying into the notion that the end of the world is nigh, is it any wonder that "Jesus take the wheel" is more often than not the default decision made by Americans. That also includes political decisions, anything from what to do about climate change and income inequality to how to handle terrorism and police brutality. Particularly scary is the reality that citizens and elected officials are making decisions about a future they don't believe is going to happen. Why do anything about global warming or institutional racism when the world is going to end soon?

Take environmental issues. More and more people, and the politicians they elect, don't believe that global warming or a sixth mass extinction or pollution or even littering are a problem because after the world is laid waste at the battle of Armageddon, the Second Coming of Jesus will usher in a new heaven, a new earth, and a new Jerusalem. This denial of basic reality is a huge fucking problem for the rest of us, and for the

survival of the planet. There's no need to be prudent or plan ahead or take care of the next generation if the world is going to end in our lifetime. Ann Coulter once said that having children is what makes people conservative, because they now have a stake in the game and an interest in the future. But becoming an end time Christian actually makes people nihilistic because that future is predetermined and apocalyptic.

Wow, punk rock, man! No future! Who would have thought that evangelical Christians and punk rockers have so much in common? And you know who else shares this nihilism? Islamic jihadis. Of course, Islam has its own eschatology, involving the Mahdi, al-Dajjal, Isa, Ya'juj and Ma'juj, Dabbat al-ard, destruction of Mecca, al-Qiyamah, and the Day of Judgment. The great majority of Muslims aren't apocalyptic however. Even those Muslims who narrowly focus on jihad (holy war) aren't all obsessed with the end of the world. But of those Muslims who believe in an imminent Islamic end time, virtually all practice jihad as a means of realizing their apocalypse. Al-Qaeda, Taliban, al-Nusrah Front, Islamic State—because all these end time jihadi groups are both Sunni Muslim and proponents of a fundamentalist Islamic revivalism known as Salafism, its best to call this type of terrorism Salafi jihadism.

Now, here's the really scary part. Groups of end time religious fanatics—evangelical Christians and Salafi jihadis respectively—are jockeying for power in this country and in the Middle East, with the aim of bringing about the end of the world. What's more, they've each designated the other as their mortal enemy and vow to fight to the death to defeat their foe. So now we have two fundamentalist end time religious movements potentially squaring off against each other across the globe, not in a war between civilizations or a war to save the West, but in the ultimate holy war to destroy this corrupt world and usher in a purified heaven and earth. It's Jehovah versus Allah, the Bible versus the Koran, and what's crazy is that the annihilation of civilization as we know it is not collateral damage, but the avowed goal. During the Cold War between east and west, the proliferation of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union was deemed a strategy of mutually assured destruction, a balance of nuclear terror that oddly enough kept us from blowing up the planet. Now, there is a very real danger that religious nuts will gain control and wage holy war in order to realize the end of the world.

To this apocalyptic dualism, add a third element, the Zionist zealotry of Jewish settlers in the Palestinian West Bank. Hasidic Jews like the Satmar have long decried any political attempt to force the hand of the Messiah, of which the State of Israel is the principle instance. It took the settler movement in the Occupied Territories via groups like Gush Emunim to infuse political Zionism with a religious fundamentalism that viewed the establishment of Israel as the inadvertent start of the Messianic Age, allowing the Jewish settlers to consciously hasten the coming of the Messiah by redeeming every centimeter of the Holy Land, Eretz Israel supposedly given by god to the Jews. This theocratic, halachic Zionism encompasses various elements of Jewish eschatology—Gog and Magog, the Day of Judgment, the return of exiles, even the rebuilding of a Third Temple upon the Temple Mount in a new Jerusalem and a return to animal sacrifice—and intends nothing less than building a literal paradise on earth in the form of a Greater Israel. So while the realization of a Messianic kingdom here and now through Jewish efforts is completely opposite to the divine dramaturgy that marks sweeping Christian/Islamic end of the world scenarios, there's a frightening synchronicity between the messianism of settler Zionism and the apocalypticism of Christianity and Islam.

Progressives often wonder why any sane woman votes Republican, given the GOP's atrocious record on women's issues. I constantly wonder why rational individuals have anything to do with end time politicians. I mean, how does one trust a politician or a political organization to work for the common good and a common future when they proclaim that the end of the world is near? Should an evangelical president who fervently believes in the apocalypse have his finger on the nuclear launch button? Not that electoral politics, or politics-as-usual, can do much to diffuse the apocalyptic tango between Christian evangelicals, Islamic jihadis and Jewish extremists that seems to be centered once again in the Middle East.

Evangelical voters are mostly Republicans, and they're now divided between Rubio and Cruz, with Bush in third place, as we enter February. Trump polls only slightly higher than Hillary (3.3% to 2.1% as of 7-30-15) among evangelicals, but evangelicals are by no means anybody-but-Trump types (see JC Derrick, worldmag.com, for more evangelical politics).

Trump continues to hold steady in the polls even as more and more conservatives comes out against him. The National Review recently editorialized against Trump as "a philosophically unmoored political opportunist who would trash the broad conservative ideological consensus within the GOP in favor of a free-floating populism with strong-man overtones." (1-21-16) NR hosted a symposium in which some 22 leading conservatives vented their opposition to a Trump GOP nomination. Talk show host Glenn Beck, in endorsing Ted Cruz in Iowa, said that he prefers Bernie Sanders to Donald Trump because at least Sanders is honest about being a socialist.

There's clear evidence that Trump is actually pulling a lot of his support from white working-class Democrats, all the while Trump garners endorsements from the likes of Ann Coulter and Sarah Palin. (See Robert Reich's "Who lost the white working class?" 1-19-16) The backing from Blue Dog Democrats won't be enough to get Trump elected president, but it will continue to further fracture the Republican Party and the conservative movement. Meaning that there's gonna be a lot of blood spilled before this ongoing GOP debacle falls out, and there's little likelihood the party will unite behind either Rubio or Cruz—the candidates favored by evangelicals—if Trump is not nominated. A split RNC is all but inevitable, and if one or another Republican elite attempts to broker the convention, breakaway movements and third party runs are guaranteed.

So its a win all around, except for the part about Hillary winning the presidency.

Don't be fooled by the youthful insurgency surrounding Bernie's candidacy or the supposedly hapless nature of Clinton's campaign. At this stage of the Democratic primary, she has the numbers and he doesn't, even without the intervention of party super delegates. No amount of young idealism is going to prevail over old entrenched Democratic Party money and power. It looks like Hillary faces a severely divided Republican field and a critically weakened GOP, so she will prevail. Of course, things can turn on a dime. I'm reminded of that as we go to press, and the news of Scalia's death comes home to roost. Obama, a rather middle-of-the-road Democrat, now has a stunning opportunity to significantly impact the judicial philosophy of the Supreme Court

for generations to come. His appointment in turn will be fought tooth and nail by the Republicans. Chances are good come November 2016, each party will field candidates for President, Vice President, and Supreme Court Justice.

It's pure smack to this old political junkie.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA...
My political blog is leftyhooligan.wordpress.com.
My personal blog is gamatiasz.wordpress.com.
My facebook page is facebook.com/GAMatiasz.
My email is hooligentsia@icloud.com.

I looked down into the industrial sized sink I was washing large béchamel covered mixing bowls in and for a moment wondered how I had ended up where I was, doing what I was doing. I moved to Canada from Cleveland a few months ago, almost out of the money I'd saved in Australia, and picked up this job making mac and cheese on the inner west side of Toronto. I've been working nights and long weeks to keep up with paying rent while almost running myself into the ground financially, sinking any spare penny into my label releases and other associated punk things. Because what else is there, really? This is the third city I've lived in within a year. My grandparents always used to tell me I had ants in my pants, and I guess they were right.

Although with all the moving, there was some consistency I was unwilling to let go of. I am still doing my label and have just released a 7" by Baltimore punks QUITTER. Four tracks of synth-driven weirdo punk in the vein of *Killed By Death* meets too many B-grade mutant flicks. A release I am super stoked on—just like all the others, of course! *Stitches In My Head #9* is out, containing interviews with Digital Octopus, Voice From Inside Records, Perverts Again, and the usual reviews, articles, and a stack of contributions. Available to purchase with the fanzine is an exclusive mixtape I made originally for DX while I was living in Cleveland. It features an A-side of tracks from previous releases on Blow Blood Records and a B-side of contemporary Cleveland punk bands to commemorate the short half a year I was hanging out there. I believe DX will be doing a run of his own, although with recently opening Lulu's, a record store in Melbourne in collaboration with the Cool Death Records fellas (congrats guys), plus all the usual band and fanzine stuff he's got going on, it's still up in the air on his end. I'm also still doing this column. (Barely! Love you *MRR!*) And although now separated by borders, I still continue to work on the band some friends and I started while I was in Cleveland, Vanilla Poppers. By the time this column comes out, we will have done a short east coast Canada tour and recorded for a 7" (hopefully). „The only other shows we have booked at the moment are all in Cleveland but we've got plans to tour later in the year. Because what's better than your main food supply being gas station coffee, hanging with your best friends every day, and living out of a stinky vehicle travelling hundreds of miles a day across a food-chain spotted America? Apart from that, maybe I have some other stuff on the go? I can't see my fridge covered in scrap papers listing all the things I have to keep on top of from where I'm sitting. Either way, all this hobbying is sending me broke. Broke but happy!

So since I'm working nights and I don't yet know many people here (but the people I do have been super nice. Looking at you, Sardé and Greg), I haven't been able to go to much punk related stuff. Hardly anything. But tonight was different. Tonight I had the night off and there was a punk show on and it's like being on a fucking diet and finally being able to eat a slice of goddamn cake. Such a relief and it's all I can think about. I was craving punk so much. I missed punk, and although I keep in contact with friends around the world and everything, I do revolve around punk in some sort of way. It's a little bit better when it's in your face and you're sharing it with the people around you. Like cake, I guess?

But getting back to doing the dishes. I got off shift and hurried home to rest for a moment before heading to the show. Reaching the top of the stairs and looking down into the recently opened FAITH/VOID record store (run by Ryan, front man of S.H.I.T.) in the basement on this main road, I was surprised how many people were here. I might be over-exaggerating if I said there were almost a hundred packed into this one large room space, but it felt like it,. I made my way down the stairs and forked over those hard-earned dollars at the door before entering. The large room was sectioned off into two, the well-lit front being the record store and general hangout space (if you weren't outside on the stairs and street smoking) with the almost pitch black backspace (save for one red light) available for the show.

I'd arrived just in time for CONMAN. They're a new band having just released a demo at the start of this year. It was hardcore punk with guitar that wailed on you, the songs were mean and exciting, but I kept coming back to the drums, which sounded fucking awesome. Just hard-hitting and lots of killer fills. They burned through a short set with a few people dancing around.

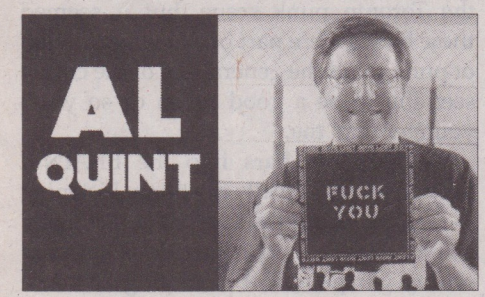
I didn't know too many people at the show, so I went and found some space on the floor to sit down in the record store. I kept getting trampled though, so I just went back to the show space to wait for the next band, PROM DATE. They were super *Killed By Death* punk mixed with Reagan-era hardcore dumbness and snotty, high-pitched chick vocals talking about stuff that matters. I dug the hell out of it. There was a bunch of people dancing around up front, pushing each other around and bouncing off each other but never going so over the top violent that not everyone could join in. These guys are also new, having just released a demo at the end of last year. I don't know much at all about the Toronto punk scene, but it seemed these bands were part of a new generation of punks, and the general age of the crowd seeming to be a good seven or so years younger than me.

A couple of bars into the BRAIN I figured it wasn't really my thing. Listening to it recorded now as I type this, it actually sounds really good, just lo-fi garbage scuzzy garage rock, but coming from the two bands previous that blew me out of the water, I wasn't expecting the abrupt change in punk from the crazy energy to more of a blown-out head fuck vibe, so I went back into the record store, which was mostly empty. I snagged a seat on the couch and sat around reading *MRR*s and fanzines from five or so years ago while sipping on tea I'd brought in a thermos from home. I was seriously having a great night.

I was looking forward to TRIAGE, having first heard them when I caught their tunes live at Not Dead Yet a few months back. It's the type of metal punk that would suit on a line-up with PARTY

PLATES and MIDNIGHT (I know, both Cleveland bands) and influenced by the classics—VENOM, MOTÖRHEAD, HELLHAMMER, and the likes. They were on last, but I couldn't really see what was going on from the back. It was packed to the brim. They had some problems with gear in the first song and then two of the people dancing up at the front got ejected from the crowd, by the crowd, assuming because they were being too douchey and fucking with the equipment. I heard someone say "They're from *Montreal*..." which I thought was hilarious. But TRIAGE kicked it into the next song, and the crowd was having a great time, a good half of the room dancing around and swaying back and forth to a local favorite.

This four band bill was put to rest in just over two hours, the show being the second of its kind held at FAITH/VOID (the first being on New Years just passed). There's already a bunch more planned for the coming months. With the recent demise of Toronto's S.H.I.B.G.B's, hopefully it'll work out and be able to host shows as an all-ages DIY space for some time to come. An online store is currently in the works, but if you're passing through this big city, it's recommended checking out and supporting, too. But in summary, I had a great time at the show and I look forward to going to shows more and hanging out more in the Toronto scene—even if I'm just sitting around drinking tea and reading old *MRR*s.



Under The Radar—The 1990s

Hot on the heels of last column's piece about under-the-radar bands of the 2000s, I've decided to go back to unearth lost gems of the previous decade—bands lost to time or ones who never got their due even back then. These records shouldn't be that tough to find and all of them are fairly inexpensive. And there's always YouTube or music blogs to hear them, as well.

THE DISTRACTORS – *Walk Away* EP (Dime Store, 1994): *Destroy All Art* compiled a bunch of '90s-era punk obscurities. One of the songs on the inaugural volume was by the Texas band YOUNG LOSERS. Before that band, the LOSERS' Trey Roblez was with the DISTRACTORS who squeezed out three 7"s between '94 and '99. They're all *killah*, but this one's my favorite. I got my mitts on it at my last record store job when my coworker ordered two copies, said there were only 200 of 'em (this was the first press—the second press on Cheap Date Records had 300), and that I might like it. I sure did. Three revved up lo-fi punk gems, and their cover of Huey "Piano" Smith's 1950s song "Don't You Just Know It" is one of my favorite covers ever. It sounds like a bad day in daycare, essentially, with off-key vocals going "*ah-ah-ah-ah! / heyyy-oh! / doobie doobie doobie doobie! / ah-ah-ah-ah!*" etc., topped off with a demented guitar solo. I'm sure one of their songs will end up on a subsequent volume of *Destroy All Art*, but you need to hear this *now*. You really do. Trust me on that one.

THE CONSERVATIVES – *This Album Is A Sovereign Nation* CD (City of Romance/Sonic Swirl, 1998): A band from Cleveland, not the '80s one from LA. Hard-driving punk and rock squall with some other tricks up its sleeve, like the GANG OF FOUR lift for "Sex Mad" or the RICHARD HELL-ish vibe for "Jaywalker," but it's on the straight-ahead tracks like "Jackology" and "Los Alamos Lab Technician" where they really hit their mark. "Girlfriend" has a haunting semi-hookiness and twisted lyrics about the end of a relationship, but when vocalist Aaron Koonce (AKA Jack Shit) sings he's "*gotta gotta get rid of you*," it's in the literal sense, if you catch my drift. Koonce was later in PROLETARIAN ART THREAT, who put out a demo in 2000 in a somewhat similar vein.

GOD AND TEXAS – *History Volume One* CD (Rave, 1992): Another Ohio band, only GOD AND TEXAS were from Columbus and later relocated to Chicago. They released four albums and a few 7"s over their existence. This album, by far their best, was their second, and the CD version also includes their 1991 album *Industry Standard* and "1066," from a split 7" with PAIN TEENS. Their brand of punk kind of bridged the gap between HÜSKER DÜ inspired stuff (vocalist John Humphrey sounds a bit like Bob Mould) and some of the mid-'90s Amphetamine Reptile bands like GUZZARD. Surging songs with a powerful drive but also some hooks poking through from time to time, especially on the aforementioned "1066." "Bread and Circuses" starts things off with some dramatic riffing and includes a shit-hot guitar solo. "Mask And Glove" squeals and careens from start to finish. They put out two albums after this one—1993's *Criminal Element*, which showed them going in a HELMET-inspired direction and had a few decent tracks but doesn't hold up as well and the not-so-great *Double Shot*, which added a sax player and went into jazzier realms.

WRECK – *Soul Train* LP (Play It Again Sam, 1990): WRECK originally came from Milwaukee and, like GOD AND TEXAS, also ended up in Chicago. DIE KREUZEN bassist Keith Brammer played on this album and their preceding four-track 12" (which is appended onto the end of the CD release). Muscular post-punk recorded by Steve Albini, so there's a booming bottom end. That's accompanied by Dean Schlabowske's jagged, angular guitar lines and braying vocals. He adds some slide on the relentless "Bumfork Aire." Two offbeat covers—one of the SENSATIONAL ALEX HARVEY BAND's "Ribs and Balls" (which I'm sure very few of you ever heard) and a pummeling, relentless take on the FALL's "Various Times." The follow-up EP, *House of Boris*, is also worth checking out, but their second full-length, *El Mundo de Los Ninõs*, smoothessmoothed things out a bit too much.

TUB – *Why I Drink* LP (Double Deuce, 1995): A NYC trio who would have been at home on the Amphetamine Reptile roster. A throttling, smashing sound punctuated with melodic touches in the guitar lines and vocal harmonies. The mid-section of "Repeller" has an absolute knockout of a hook. Guitar, bass, and drums create a potent sonic swarm, but there's a solid structure to the songs. When I interviewed them way back when, they said they weren't really a "political" band, per se, but there are topical songs. The opening track, "Charles Murray," is about the racist author of *Losing Ground* and *The Bell Curve* and other books that made bogus arguments about the supposedly lower intelligence level of African-Americans and Latinos. His "research" was used as the basis to cut welfare programs because they were supposedly useless. And being 1990s-era New Yorkers, having a song called "Rudy Giuliani Armani" makes sense. Their sole album was preceded by a 7", and they also had a song on one of my *Suburban Voice* 7" compilations.

THE SHOTDOWNS – *The Party Is A Frat House* EP (Lookout, 1995): I imagine many SCREECHING WEASEL fans know about this record, but just in case—the SHOTDOWNS was a side band/moonlighting project with Ben and

Jughead from SCREEACHING WEASEL along with Chicago rock journalist/author Jim DeRogatis (all using fake names), and it's pretty far removed from pop punk. Not completely devoid of melody, but it's got a caustic edge, and Ben sings in a rougher, nastier tone. The mid-tempo basher "Going Nowhere Fast" stands out on this six-song dose of punk bile.

LOAD – *Pastor's Day* EP (Faceless Wreckerds, 1993): This Florida band had a number of releases throughout the '90s, and there was a compilation that came out in 2014 on Rat Town Records, but I'm not so sure how well known they were outside of their home state. They fused hardcore with more metallic flourishes, and it never sounded better than on this 1993 single. The title track comes at you non-stop like a supersonic motherfucker, to quote the lyrics. Their vocalist Bobby Johnston AKA Bobby Load (RIP) sounds like an unhinged maniac. The other two songs, "Saving You From Your Life" and "Half Bake," also buzz over all in their path.

From The Past To The Present

KILSLUG have been kicking around in one form or another since the 1980s, and their latest disc is a split two-song 7" with UK band DRUNK IN HELL. KILSLUG's "Sick Sick Sick" (or "666") is a rockin' crusher, with Larry Lifeless's nasal whine accompanied by a formidable heaviness that also has a groove. It doesn't hurt they have a strong lineup these days, with John Kozik (ex-OUT COLD) and John Darga (ex-WRECKING CREW) in the fold. DRUNK IN HELL's track, "Hungry For Blood," is slow and heavy as fuck, although it gets tedious after a while. (At War With False Noise/Lupus, atwarwithfalsenoise.com)

The two latest releases in Sorry State's North Carolina Singles Series come from BANDAGES and WHATEVER BRAINS. BANDAGES includes former members of DOUBLE NEGATIVE and POLLUTION. "All Extreme Measures" and "Tokyo Car Wash" are both riff monsters, and the former balances the heaviness with a burst of speed. A merger of BL'AST, MELVINS, and early HELMET? Maybe. Intense stuff. WHATEVER BRAINS have always been an odd band, and that's no exception on this 7" or their new, self-titled album (their fourth). The A-side of the 7", the engagingly-quirky "An Object," is on the album, and the ambient drone of the B-side, "My Autumn's Done Gone," isn't. "PUNK" is splashed across the top of the cover in a font that looks like what you'd get from an old dot matrix printer, and it certainly pushes the parameters of what one would consider punk. It's a mechanized version of it, relying more on electronics than standard instrumentation and sometimes creating a woozy effect. "An Object" is probably the most "conventional" sounding track with *154*-era WIRE pulse. Quite challenging—sometimes more than one might have the patience for. (Sorry State, sorrystaterecords.com)

PARASYTES is the latest band for ex-HELLBOUND/AFTER THE BOMBS/TRUNCHEONS vocalist Janick Langlais. On their *Straight Jacket* EP, there's a slight difference from her other bands in that the guitar tone is somewhat cleaner, even adding some phasing for "Frantic." For the mid-tempo "Paranoid Visions," there's a DISCHARGE influence but not so much D-Beat as that band's "In Defence of Our Future" era, and that's the best song of the three. The others follow a traditional early '80s UK route with plenty of speedy burn. (Distort Reality, distortreality.storenvy.com)

Lewis from Nopatience Records was nice enough to send along a few of his recent releases, including the latest EP from NYC hellions CRAZY SPIRIT (which has also just been released in the US on Toxic State). You know the deal by now—nasally vocals and a fuzzy, buzzy punk attack underpinned by clattering, galloping drums. The tempo actually seems a bit sprightlier than usual. Six tracks that run together (three per side), and it's not so much any distinction between songs as it is the overall effect—and that's still plenty ear-messing.

For something different, there's the *Perfect Vision* EP by Australian band SPITE HOUSE. Goth-style punk, although the guitar playing has fuzzy touches to go along with the shimmer, particularly on the title track, the best of the four. They definitely take a page from early SIOUXSIE, with Stina's vocals having a similar swoop as Ms. Sioux's. (No Patience, nopatience.org)

As I've been saying a lot lately, fuck off to anyone who thinks punk/hardcore/what-have-you is just a youth movement meant to be played by young people to other young people. MORAL PANIC prove that point on their *Your Decline* 7". With members from Sydney and Melbourne, some of these geezers used to be in AVO, and the drummer was in DEPRESSION years and years ago. Pure malice and venom on their concise, blink-'n- you-miss-it hardcore thrash songs that are executed with on-a-dime precision. And for a changeup there's a cover of the old LA punk band SKULLS song "Victims." Play loud and get the hell off my lawn. (Heinous Fuck, reverbnation.com/moralpanic88)

DRONEZ' *Corporate Funded Terror* EP is an exercise in Scandi/D-beat musical terror. Four blazing tracks with harsh/howling vocals with a bit 'o reverb, a wall of guitar noise, and basic drumming getting the job done. Not a lot of variation in song structures here, but the four tracks create a fast 'n ugly firestorm. Their guitarist/vocalist Jay Collins also sent an earlier flexi that features more of the same. Inspired title: *Fuck You and All You Don't Stand For*. Both of them are tucked inside hand-screened sleeves. (dektalmapunks@gmail.com)

Ending with a book review: the second volume of Dave Brown's *Adult Crash* photobook has just been published some seven years after the first one. And, as with that volume, you get an EP featuring four cover versions from VIOLENT REACTION (AGNOSTIC FRONT's "Victim In Pain"), BARGE (YOUTH OF TODAY's "Stabbed In The Back"—incidentally, SPAZZ did the definitive cover of that song), NIGHT BIRDS (EFFIGIES' "Haunted Town" with a surfy twist), and GOVERNMENT WARNING (CIRCLE JERKS' "Deny Everything").

As for the book itself, it's similar to the first one—a collection of photos laid out scrapbook style over a backdrop of flyers, interspersed with reminiscences from various "scene fixtures" musing about how they're trying to carry on the punk inspiration and ethics in their lives as the years pass and adult responsibilities come into play. Some of the contributors are Kevin Seconds, Chris Boarts Larson, Eerie Von, Thomas Barnett (STRIKE ANYWHERE), Chuck Miller (*X-Claim* zine and Temperance Records) and others.

This time around the photos and locations of the shows are dated and Dave brings in contributions from other photographers (including yours truly). He also uses larger photos, just a couple on each page, so they create a more striking visual image. As you view the interactions between the performers and the audience members, you quickly realize that there's a certain timelessness to hardcore. You could be cynical and say it's just the same old shit over and over or take the opposite track and think that it's awesome that people continue to discover what's special about it and how it becomes an unforgettable part of their lives. I'm of both minds, depending on the day, but

don't deny it's something that still means a lot to me. That won't apply to everyone in those photos, but it certainly does to the people who contributed to this book. The package also includes a digital download of the first book and the tracks form the 7" that accompanied that one. (Vicious Circle and Six Feet Under, vcrecs.bigcartel.com)

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BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

The Doors are the best band I have ever heard."
—Grace Ambrose, 2016

My ears are burning...in fact, looking down, I can see my whole *body* is burning, and if I don't dunk myself in a vat of cool urine soon, my own mother won't recognize me when I go to her bedroom tonight...and that's got me thinking about music that is always, always bad.

The first time I was screwing around with a girl I stuck one finger in her asshole. That went alright, so I figured I could fit two. In five minutes, my whole body was up there, and I just about died from suffocation somewhere near her liver...

Slid a whole carton of eggs right up into her cunt, heard the shells cracking and the yolk running as she slept that night. In the morning she pissed yellow yolk into two pint glasses, and we drank it for the protein. That wasn't cool—that was weird, not alright. I'm sorry, it was gross and shameful, and I think about it most nights when I take scalding hot showers trying to get the ick of living off of me. My one little stick of hope I nibble is that at least I'm not dressing up in cloaks and painting my face silly colors. Black metal! Trash music for sissies and dogfuckers. All of it is unlistenable; anyone who likes it is a moron. I can attest to this, because all the cretinous losers I grew up with who got hooked on the stuff have since turned into meth-using Nazis or have thankfully faded into much-deserved obscurity. Once in a while (even this is too often), I meet someone who actually enjoys listening to this shit as an adult. These mercifully rare occurrences I take as occasions to reassess my life, to consider perhaps suicide—instead, I call the cops and tell them I saw the guy fucking a raccoon and to come please throw him into prison at the earliest possible time convenient.

I spent my childhood munching scabs... Grew up into a doughy chimp...a lumpy fleshy sack filled with bones and garbage. That's me! But then, what should I be ashamed of? Think of the losers I hang around. A bunch of bums and crooks committing petty thefts from Walgreens, standing on street corners and spitting in the gutter. But at least they're human beings!

Saw this chalked on the ground outside my work: "YOU'RE A WARTHOG + YOU'RE ON MY LIST." Someone out there is talking my language, putting words to my dumb thoughts. I get the message, coming through on all frequencies, pal. Those are the words I think whenever I see anyone with a mohawk and more than one stud—you're a warthog, you scum, and you're on my list. No freaks in my zone! Dumb apes initiating a fashion from before they were born...you're essentially pulling some cosplay. You might as well be at the Star Trek convention with all your Exploited records and Framtid t-shirts. Ugly! Stupid! Vicious little dogs yapping, chasing their tales in circles...

Here's what happened to a guy I know who made some bad decisions and screwed around with weird Night Operators: He woke up with a gun jammed up against his front teeth. Got dragged out of bed and these characters made him do all his own coke, about half a pound of the stuff. Heart exploded a half hour in. Every time I hear this junk, this garbage masquerading as music, I imagine I was this friend of mine in his last moments, because at least he would never have to hear a single screech from these cretins again. What luck!

What goes on in the skulls of these rejects? I imagine just a reel-to-reel tape going *kzzzzzzzzz* into eternity, but even that's probably cooler than the boring old reality, which is just mental reruns of old Faces of Death tapes half-remembered and mixed in with sad jolts from lonely childhoods. What possesses people to hear this shit? I imagine they're just misfits who see themselves as saboteurs of culture, a thing which they are both ignorant and terrified of. Execute them!

I can't tell you how many folks I've met who've dug angels. Been in the same room, same programs as them. I tell you, though—at least those people seem happy. At least they're well-adjusted, not creepy little pissants trading cassettes and writing racist slurs on the internet. I'd suck the dicks of a thousand angels before I'd buy one of those fucking noise cassettes.

What a bad little jerk I was so much of my life! If you're an adult, and you're reading this magazine, you can more than likely say the same. What drives us to do the things that we do? Perhaps we're all just stupid until we're not, or we're just stupid all the time and can on occasion see that that's true. I wasn't the worst teenager, but I was a bad teenager. I walked around full of myself, and every time anyone would make eye contact with me I'd send them psychic rays that said "I WILL EAT YOUR GUTS, COCK SUCKER." I had to plug up my Third Eye with wads of toilet paper until I could learn to manage my mind. I am the Queen of the Jews and I will bite off your cock.

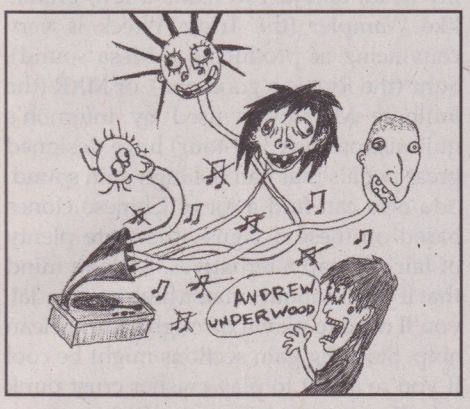
Anyone can tap into psychic frequencies...all it takes is a bit of methamphetamine. Too much speed, though, and you'll find yourself onstage in some shithole bar in Fresno, playing scales to a crowd of seven. Your metal band surrounds you and your parents, if they have not shot themselves so that they might inhabit an afterlife absent of you, are likely cowering in holes and praying for death.

A vision of menorahs cast in bronze with gold flakes sprinkled in. Jews are smart. I belong to that certain refined strata of the Chosen who wish, all of us, that we really did control the media, for then we would be able to finally put an end to some of this madness around us.

Don't come up to me and talk. I don't want a chat. The only thing we've got in common is we both like the Damned. I'm not your friend, I'm not your comrade, you're a wretched little nothing who wears a bone through his nose, and I'm the biggest piece of shit this old world has ever seen. In the final analysis, all music is bad—except, of course, for...

My pubes are long, flaxen, straight strips of blonde silk that go from my pelvis to my knees—I have to rubber band them around my legs so they don't itch me too much...Yet I remain a man with an upright back and a stiff upper lip in the face of musical adversity. I hate all of it, yet I must, I *must*, remain a punk in the service of rock'n'roll. It doesn't matter how bad their music is, how awful the

people in the bands are...all punk music is good and all other music is trash (this is a lie).



No point in burying the lede this month—the fucking DHK/MAQUINA MUERTA split LP is out! Two of the angriest, most stripped-down and straightforward D-beat bands on this rotten planet collide, and the result is (not surprisingly) an instant classic. While these two bands do share a similar set of influences and ideals, their approaches are quite distinct and very complementary. MAQUINA MUERTA are today's standard bearers for the ANTI-CIMEX legacy, especially the second and third EPs. Bleak and blown-out, with tempos that can feel almost dirge-like. Every vocal is delivered like it could be the singer's dying breath, the bass is filthy and nearly sub-sonic, the riffs are memorable, the leads are simple and catchy, and the drummer infuses his D-beats with a touch of swing that makes every song flow effortlessly. Everything about this recording is 100% on point, and it sounds fantastic, letting the rhythm section dominate without burying the guitar and vocals. This is a band that knows exactly what they want to do, and they execute flawlessly every time. Every track is a killer, but "Destino Controlado," with its dramatic bass breaks, may be the best song MAQUINA MUERTA have written yet. DHK have a much more ramshackle and high-end focused attack, recalling a garage recording of *Realities of War*. Like MAQUINA MUERTA, DHK know how to lay back and take their time, never pushing the tempo needlessly. This means that when they do pick up the pace, like they do during "Piratealo Todo," it feels especially urgent. The raw vocals and barely-distorted guitar take center stage, with the bass and drums having a nearly subliminal presence at times. Notably, they mix a sample into "5 De Juno," something they haven't done before, but it works incredibly well, the desperate female voice adding great gravity to the song. If you read this column, you need this record in your life. (Metadona)

Japan's D.E.A.D. boast an impressive "ex-members of…" list that will probably drive some punks to purchase their new EP unheard, but if you're on the fence, please rest assured that you're in for a feast of blazing traditional Japanese hardcore. All the elements you would expect are present: tricky metallic riffs and amazing solos, tough-as-nails vocals, and acrobatic bass lines, though they're notably light on the usual gang choruses. D.E.A.D. have a rock 'n' roll edge that bring them in line with contemporaries like BLOWBACK and MUSTANG (hell, some of the guitar licks are noticeably Slash-esque!), but the frantic drumming keeps this well-grounded in hardcore punk. The key question to ask about a record like this is "Does it make you throw your fist in the air?" The answer in this case is a resounding yes! Especially during the over-the-top guitar solo in "Liar Game." As a first salvo from a new band (even one composed of veteran punks), this over-achieves, and I'm sure the next barrage will be even more intense. (Imminent Destruction)

Speaking of MUSTANG, they've got a new single! It's been a long time since the last MUSTANG release, and "Poison/Blood Rain" shows very clearly that they haven't lost a step. Fuck, this is better than a lot of their earlier stuff! Both tracks are relatively short, going right for the throat with frantic swarm-of-bees riffing, Benkei's trademark sore-throated vocals, and propulsive drumming leading the way. If you're not full-on moshing at the incredible climax of "Blood Rain," you're probably doing this punk thing wrong. The only real shame is that there's so much room on the vinyl left for another track or two. Pick this up now and cross your fingers that there's more on the way sooner rather than later. (Kamaset Levyt / Tampere Hardcore Coalition)

Alongside the amazing G-GAS demo/live reissue LP (which was co-released with General Speech), Not Very Nice Records has also unleashed the monstrous POISON COLA double CD discography, an equally incredible piece of hardcore archaeology. Collecting tracks recorded between 1985 and 1997 and spread across six demo tapes, a split EP, and a compilation EP, this is a meticulously arranged collection of material by one of the true lost gems of the Japanese hardcore scene. From the rough, poorly-recorded early demos to the wild live shows to the amazing post-'92 classic era when the addition of guitarist Yasu elevated the band from merely good to truly top-tier, this is all worth hearing, but disc two is where it's fucking at. Songs like "Forward," "Slang," and "Till Comeing The Day" are as good as anything the early '90s Japanese hardcore scene produced. Unforgettable riffs, mesmerizing solos, unpredictably structured songs, and just plain mean vocals. It's hard to say why this band didn't get more proper releases and become better known than they did, but I can say for sure it has nothing to do with the quality of their material. The packaging deserves a mention, too, as the graphic design is fantastic (punk as fucking fuck!), and the booklet includes tons of material including all the art from the various releases, tons of pictures, gig flyers, and even reviews! I know that CD isn't the hippest format these days (except in Japan, where it's still quite popular), but if you're in any way a fan of Japanese hardcore, this is a must-have, especially at the insanely low price (ten dollars!) that the label is selling it for. Get the fucking EP, too, because those four songs are the only POSION COLA tracks not available in this discography. (Not Very Nice)

Old Punks! I'm getting there myself, but the punks featured on this new compilation EP are even older than me. Four tracks by four doughty stalwarts of the Japanese street punk and hardcore scenes, every one a total peach. DISCOCKS open the slab with a surprisingly poppy number about the halcyon year of 1994 when everyone was throwing up on their bondage pants and getting their gluebags stuck to their giant mohawks. The LAST SURVIVORS offer up a track that adds a healthy dollop of straight-up Japanese hardcore to UK'82 (give us a new solo record please, your new material is so good!), channeling both ONE WAY SYSTEM and DEATH SIDE. LIFE continue their run of being one of the best crust bands on the planet, with fifty seconds of driving chaos that's equal parts CRUDE SS and DOOM. It's amazing how LIFE are equally adept at these short blasts and long metallic ragers. Finally, TOM & BOOT BOYS provide "I Like Girls," which may be their dumbest song ever (and that's saying something!). Just fucking dumb as hell, driven by cowbell and featuring kazoo backups. I will never again doubt their ability to somehow lower the bar even further for themselves. Just to be clear, "I Like Girls" is fucking great, and were it the only song on this record, I'd still recommend that you buy it. (Pogo 77)

Young punks! BEER BELLY are back and holding strong with their new CD *Beer Belly's Last Single* (I sure hope that title isn't literal). As usual, this is super fast pogo punk but with a bit of a harder edge than their earlier stuff. "Police Shit" in particular is practically a hardcore song, with a mean riff that's appropriate for the subject matter. The drumming on this record is fantastic, just a constant speedy rumble that's so fast (and goofily recorded) that it's just an undifferentiated mass of tupa-tupa and crashing cymbals. All three members trade vocals, with some really catchy trade-offs appearing in "Pogo & Drunk" in particular. Five tracks, five minutes, all fucking punk. Self-released, too. Who says that drunk punks can't get anything done? (Nonsense)

Until next time, get at me via MRR or at agunderwood@gmail.com. Send beer!

The Metal-Hardcore Sound

I must confess, I like it when hardcore is played with a metal sound. Don't get me wrong, I don't like it when a hardcore band tends to pass a ripped-off Slayer kind of tune for a brand new one. No, I'm talking about all the bands that sound sharp and aggressive. I've been on a kick lately of some old bands that had that sound, merging metal sound with the strength of punk hardcore.

Well, I'm pretty sure all these bands share a common thing, and it is all laid down in their rig. Most of them use pretty much the same set up. It's always about having a high gain amplifier, and most of the times it is usually a Peavey 5150 (which is now manufactured under two companies; one of them is EVH, which has the right to use the name 5150, while Peavey still produces its own version named 6505) or a Mesa Dual Rectifier series. These amps have a huge amount of gain, which really helps to acheive that heavy shredding sound. You'll hardly have any chance to shred with a classic Fender amp, if you're about to try. The Marshall JCM800 can do the job, too. Some people tend to push it harder with a booster or a tube screamer in front of it. Peavey also made plenty of cool amps back in the days like the VTM or the original Butcher series (not to be confused with the new Butcher).

One thing that works really well with high gain amps is active pick-ups. I wrote about that previously, but if you have a 9v battery inside your instrument, it is loaded with active pick-ups. Actually, any pick-up that is loaded with a ceramic magnet will do a great job for a high gain sound. Some high output pick-ups with an ALNICO V or VIII could also fit, but I think the ceramic magnet is just the best design for this game.

You don't necessarily need heavy strings to achieve a heavy sound, but most of the people in that style like to play downtuned a full step down or a full step and a half down. You'll probably enjoy playing with a set of 11-50 strings or heavier for D standard, and 12-52 strings or heavier for C# standard. That's what I felt was the most convenient to my fingers, and the strings that would induce the same tension that you'd have in standard with a set of 10-46 strings. But some people like heavier strings, so feel free to experiment. The only thing you have to keep in mind is that the more you drop your tuning, the more you'll need bigger strings to compensate the tension. And it is the exact same thing for bass. Tuning a bass to C#, I'd recommend at least a set of 50-120.

A great addition to any good metal set up would be any speaker with a high mid-range spike, like the Celestion Vintage 30. I am not a huge fan of these and prefer the WGS Veteran 30 which has a smoothed out upper-mid "spike," even if the Vintage 30 still does a fine job. What you want anyway is any speaker that doesn't sound too much out of the mid-range zone, because that is where the aggressive high gain sound will work the best toward the mix of the band. One great alternative to the Celestion Vintage 30 is the Celestion G12 Century Vintage. I had the chance to record with that speaker, and I thought that it suited the high gain spirit perfectly.

Also, if you tend to use speakers that have a small magnet (any speakers that can handle less than 50 watts usually have a small magnet, like the Celestion Green Back), they will break up too early and create speaker distortion, and your tube amp distortion will sound muddy and flat. That is something I discovered from borrowing cabinets from other musicians for quite some time.

If you are seeking any alternative to a high gain head, there are plenty of pedals that can do the job. A lot of them will emulate the Mesa Rectifier sound. Out of my head, and just to name a few, brands like Wampler (the Triple Wreck is very convincing at producing a Mesa sound), Suhr (the Riot is a good one), or MXR (the Fullbore Metal was used by Infernöh's guitarist on their last tour) have designed great pedals that nail the high gain sound. You also can find a lot of Chinese clones based on these designs—there are plenty of fairly cheap alternatives. Keep in mind that if you're about to use a high gain pedal, you'll need to play it through a fairly clean amp. Stacking gain sections might be cool if you're about to play crasher crust punk à la Zyanose, but if you're looking for a sharp metal hardcore sound, it will just sound really muddy in the end. Anyway, these pedals will do the job fine, but it can't compete with a real high gain tube amp anyway, so if you can, just try to get the real deal.

All in all, it is pretty easy to attain that sound. High output Humbuckers (ceramic magnet mostly) or active pick-ups through a high gain head with clean and mid-ranged speakers are the best secrets to achieve that metal hardcore sound.

OBITUARY

CARLOS MAGÁN "BOUI"

The alternative rock scene in Peru is mourning the death of Carlos Magan, "Boui". The founding bass player of the Peruvian post-punk band Voz Propia died in the city of Lima on January 12th. At the time of his passing, Voz Propia was preparing to record a new album.

Voz Propia, founded in 1986, is the leading band of the second "underground" ("subterránea") generation of the 1980s. A self-proclaimed generation with "no future," they entered adulthood in a society ridden by violence, class divisions, internal conflict (with insurrections led by the Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement) and a full-scale economic collapse. Contrarily to the ubiquitous viscerally hardcore punk bands at that time, Voz Propia introduced melody to their songs, used keyboards, and their lyrics channeled not only anger and hate,

but also vulnerability and existentialism. A resolute artist, Boui also played in other groups like QEPD Carreño, Radio Kriminal, and later with Espirales. He acted in documentaries, video clips and even modelled for plastic artists.

From the beginning Boui became an iconic figure in Voz Propia and the "underground" scene. Impossible to miss in a crowd, Boui was tall, blondish with light blue eyes—not your typical Peruvian. His physical resemblance to David Bowie granted him the eponymous nickname. Like Bowie (his personal hero), Boui enjoyed changing his looks, particularly his hair. He dyed and styled it in the most outrageous shades: from bleached blonde to green, purple, and pink. He even shaved his head at one point, and left just a mohawk dyed in a vibrant neon shade.

Boui was committed to the egalitarian values of a movement that in exchange channelled his individuality, anger and anti-establishment mind. Not even sympathizers of the movement escaped Boui's tongue-lashings. Here he is in 1985, when he was 18 years old. His political views did not change much later:

> Boui: "They claim to be punks, but they contribute to the system that corrupts people, the underdogs at the bottom, to existing injustices!"
> Reporter: "And you, are you one of those at the bottom?"
> Boui: "No, I am not, but I am in favor of the underdogs."

A very charismatic, outgoing and open-minded individual, Boui had an uncanny knack for making friends and conveying genuine good "vibes" among people. His laugh and deep voice were unforgettable and he shared them without distinction to those around him. Those who knew him well remember Boui as an avid reader, excellent conversationalist and authentic "every step of the way."

During the last decade of his life, Boui drove an old motorcycle wearing the helmet assigned to female cops ("casco de tombita"). Boui was thin but in his latter years he was almost emaciated and looked older than he really was. Hard living was passing the bill. Due to his extreme lifestyle, his membership in Voz Propia was intermittent. In more than one occasion he was asked to leave the group due to his undisciplined behavior.

The abrupt death of David Bowie on January 10 hit Voz Propia very hard, as the band feels heavily indebted to Bowie's work. Punks in Lima were absorbing the loss of the Star Man, mourning his departure when news broke that Boui, passed away in the largest hospital in Lima due to complications with diabetes two days later. The word on the street as that Boui had left us to follow his hero. The alternative music scene in Lima was deeply wounded.

Social networks already inundated with expressions of sorrow for David Bowie's death were deluged with pictures and tributes to Boui. Even mainstream media outlets covered the passing of one of the larger than life heroes of the alternative musical scene in Lima. Radio shows and bloggers dedicated special programing and posts to him.

Boui's funeral was well attended. Even people who left the underground scene a long time ago reappeared to pay homage. Peruvian Underground's "crème de la crème" was there, accompanying Boui's family. The next day many also attended his cremation and the spread of his ashes in the Pacific Ocean. Dozens of people sailed in boats with his photograph and the urn with his ashes singing "El Momento" (1997), one of the few songs he wrote for Voz Propia.

In 2014, Boui participated in a roundtable about the cultural legacy of the 1980s Peruvian Punk movement. He eloquently described his "inheritance" from this tumultuous period of excess and freedom as follows: "Fuck, man, it left me a rotten head" ("*Puta, a mí me dejó la cabeza destruída*").

Boui left adoring fans and friends, a loving partner and three beautiful boys.

Fabiola Bazo, subterock.com

OBITUARY

VI SUBVERSA
1935–2016

Vi Subversa died February 19th, 2016. Born in London on June 19th , 1935, she lived to be 80. I am feeling selfish about wanting more time from her, more art, more wisdom, more. I'm whining like a fucking baby.

I DENOUNCE THE SYSTEM THAT DENIES MY EXISTENCE

Vi was to me—since I first heard Poison Girls in 1985, and especially in these last few years—an example. There are more and more examples every day of the badass punk women in their 40s and 50s, and I am grateful to be middle-aged in my world at this time. But Vi was *way, way* before me, helping to create our world.

"I wanted to be there as a person in my own right joining in the fun and making music and exchanging ideas and being where the action is. What fun."

I'm so appreciative of her role in Poison Girls: playing music with the younger folks, and of her leadership, her poetry, her kindness and her politics. Also of her life before the band, and all the living she did to be able to write those songs, and her life after—master gardener, artist, etc.—a grand example of a full and well lived life.

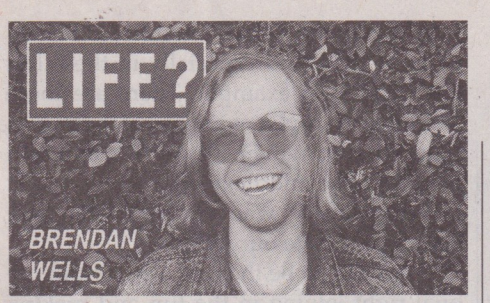
"We're supposed to be about wanting change—we make critiques of the world we live in. I think that if you want to make change you have to have trust between people. If all we do is display the hard side of ourselves to each other, we're generating terror. I've seen this at a lot of gigs and it isn't what I want. I want to be hard enough to say what's wrong, and tender enough to expose each other to the possibility of trust. Out of that can come change—because change involves risk—when you show each other that without terror we're vulnerable, and that we need to change and can trust each other and work together."

Poison Girls have helped me be brave in this world that wants us invisible, minimized, silenced, and struggling. I'm so thankful for the tape traders and DJs who brought Poison Girls into my life initially, and for the reissues and *Kill Your Pet Puppy* who helped me dive in deep. In the recent All the Madmen release of the *Persons Unknown* 12", Poison Girls talk about how the lyrics and sentiments resonate as well as they ever did. "The song is an invocation to Reclaim Our Voice. Become Visible. Make Eye Contact. Make Ourselves Seen and Heard." That's all they ask of us, that's what Vi did with her life, and helped make it possible for me to do in my own.

"Our intention was to communicate authentically, fueled by love and passion."

Thanks Vi. Rest in Power.

Erin Yanke



People around here talk about how the *Maximum Rocknroll* house is haunted. Some people see silhouettes in the hallways, a record somehow warped-out beyond playability while sitting on the turntable; I'm sure there's a lot more freaky stuff, but I don't really want to know about it. I hate hearing this place is haunted because I end up being here alone a lot at night. I'm an overactive thinker, and I don't need paranormal anxieties compounded onto my everyday normal anxieties. I take a long walk down the hallway with all the records in it every night when I go to bed, turning the lights off as I go, and it's hard not to think something might be following me. People think that Tim Yohannan haunts *Maximum Rocknroll*, and that only makes sense. Tim died here in the front apartment and he loved this place—Where else would he haunt? If ghosts exist, this place is absolutely haunted. I've been told that sometimes after putting records away in the collection that people will come out the next morning to find random records sticking out a few inches from the shelves. Ghosts?

A couple weeks ago I was walking down the hallway to my room and at the end of the hallway I saw a record sticking out of the shelf by my feet. I recognized the Alien Snatch logo on the back cover, the German garage rock label and the first international record label I'd found out about as a teenager. I pulled out the record to see what it was—*Plastic Girls* by the Minds, an LP from a Portland keyboard punk band from the mid-'00s (calling it synth punk might be giving it too much credit). I feel like most people wouldn't give a shit about that record (Greg Harvester knows about the Minds, but he cares about a lot of crap that most people don't), and listening to it now the best track is an Adverts cover, but *Plastic Girls* was one of my favorite albums in high school and the Minds were one of the first DIY bands I obsessed over that weren't from my home state.

I put the record on, and it wasn't great, but it was a nostalgic trip. How did I stumble on something so comforting? There have been times here in my first couple months of moving to San Francisco where I don't feel comfortable at all and I feel like I just don't know much at all. The record collection here is a daunting testament to the enormity of what DIY punk is and what I don't know. What do I know up against the punk obsessive shitworkers? I met Ricky, a shitworker who moved here not that long ago from Guam, and we talked about '00s Midwest screamo and Iowa DIY bands. How does he know as much about my friends' bands as I do?

Feeling self-conscious is like a hallmark of the punk experience for me. Worrying my musical tastes aren't obscure enough has always been in the back of my head when I trade mixtapes with people who obsess over the search for the most esoteric shit. It's an uncomfortable feeling of not being smart enough or good enough. I know that's almost entirely to blame on my own neuroses, and I'm sure some of the deepest diggers lack some self-confidence even in their niches, but it's hard not to compare yourself to others.

It isn't that cool of a band to care about, but that Minds LP was important to me to me for awhile, and it's also a part of this enormous DIY record catalogue we have here at *MRR*, in a sense just as important as a lot of the other 48,000 records we have here (undeniably not going to be sought after like some of the others, but still…). Seeing that record let me see myself a little bit in the *MRR* record collection and a little better in the context of what the magazine is here for. My bands from the Midwest haven't put out canonical, punk-defining albums, and I listen to and care about some shitty music that nobody else wants to listen to, but it's all here in the collection and it's gratifying to think that I've contributed in some way in the *MRR* context of punk existence. Even if your bands end up in the dollar bin out in the real world, you'll at least be taking up shelf space here at *MRR*.

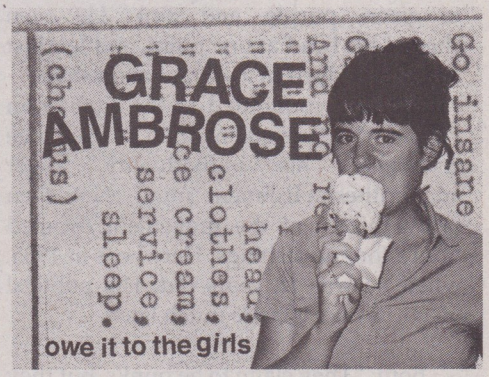
So why was my favorite record from high school sticking out for me to find? A paranormal welcoming gesture? A "Don't get full of yourself because I know you listened to keyboard punk in high school" omen? As daunting as the task and responsibility of being a content coordinator is, as much as I've felt self-conscious being someone whose formative years were in the punk scene in Des Moines, Iowa, and not a place with as much going on or as much historical and cultural significance to punk as, say, San Francisco, finding that record is a good reminder of how punk is a majorly open-ended culture that allows for such a great range of participation and experience, and I'm happy to think *Maximum Rocknroll* has always wanted to help facilitate that. Now I gotta download some ghost detecting apps on my phone and see what's really up.

ENDNOTES:

1) The Still Not Quiet on the Western Front fest happened out here a couple weeks ago and it whooped ass hard. Uranium Club was lucky enough to play and it felt amazing. Later that day some of my best friends from different parts of the country played in Mozart, American Hate, and the Bug, and made me feel this great sense of community for this DIY crew of people whose music I love and who I identify with on a major personal level. There's a shit load to talk about on that, so maybe I'll talk about how much love I have for the fam next month.

2) I got a job washing dishes at a café around the corner. I am one of you. I am a punk (until I can get my ass out of there).

3) Grace, Eli, and I made a bold decision and bought plane tickets to fly out for the Everything Is Not OK fest in Oklahoma City in mid-March. I will be the Midwest liaison to these coastal freaks and show them what is up. There's a dope ass interview with the fest organizer, Ross, in this issue—a true Midwest punk hero who loves his grandma.



"I'm a fest punk, you're a fest punk
You can buy cool friends and happiness
Like the rest of the fest punks"
—"Fest Punk," D.L.I.M.C.

Mid-February in the Bay Area is a lot nicer than mid-February just about anywhere else in the United States, so what better way to celebrate than by inviting all of our friends to come and play shows? We threw a fest this month. If you missed it, you missed 80 degree days, vegan Filipino food, brown bag West Oakland park beers, and, of course, a few dozen great sets. Don't worry, it's happening next year. We had too much fun not to repeat it.

I hesitate to use the f-word. There were no holy-shit headliners, no expensive tickets, no all-inclusive weekend passes. I kept saying, "Think of it as a bunch of stacked gigs right in a row" and that's exactly what it was. It felt distinctly Maximum, in a sense. The shows were diverse (just like our coverage in the magazine, powerviolence and power pop in equal measure!), organized by committee (we want this rag to be a collective effort!), rooted in the Bay Area (turns out there are lots of Bay Area bands I back!). The crowd looked different every night; I hope the gatherings reminded people that MRR can indeed be for everyone, that you can take part, that the magazine cares about what you are doing and wants to hear from you

about why and how you are doing it. The best part? It felt like a weekend mercifully free of cool guys, Noisey apologists, and social capitalists. It was fun but it didn't feel like a non-stop drink-yourself-to-death party (but there was still plenty of partying, if that's your thing!). It was a much needed jolt, a kick in the ass, a reminder that punk can be fun, and thought-provoking, and energizing, and all at the same time, that it doesn't need to feel like a chore, an obligation, a series of familiar and tiresome actions.

We had a group of Midwesterners at our house for the long weekend: the Bug, American Hate, Uranium Club, and their various associates, roadies, hangers-on, and nogoodniks. My band, Mozart, played with the Bug and American Hate at one of the Saturday night after-shows. Am I allowed to call a gig that I played the show of the fest? I guess I'm the one who makes the rules around here, so I'll say it. The gig killed. The after-show venue switched things on us last minute (thank you, Dan Goetz and Lena for rolling with it and making things happen on Friday!) and shows intended for a tiny, dark basement ended up in an huge, ornate auditorium. Maybe the change of vibe inspired the Bay Area punks to dance. Maybe it was the Midwestern associates, roadies, hangers-on, et al. who all ooze sick pit style. Maybe shows that start after midnight are just guaranteed to get wild, but the evening ranks in my favorite punk shows I have ever attended, let alone played. Freaks and femmes ruled the floor and perhaps for the first time ever in my decade plus of attending punk gigs, there wasn't even one guy whose dancing bummed everyone out. There's always one guy and somehow we dodged it.

It felt like a really cathartic moment, the platonic ideal of a punk show for me: playing with and for people you respect whose music you love. We had spent the past three days in constant dialogue, talking about what we like and hate about our respective cities, talking shit on bad men and boring hardcore, cracking jokes and also getting hella real. For me, that show in particular was illustrative of the international network of DIY punks, a reminder that the social parts of this are just as important as the sonic ones, that it's those kinds of interactions that separate the punks from the rockers. Yeah, all our bands ripped that night, but—and not to sound like a Turnstile fan—the fam vibe is what set it apart. I was and remain inspired, making art, writing songs, getting reenergized about the magazine. Thanks to everyone who worked to make the weekend possible, everyone who played, everyone who came to watch. See you next year.

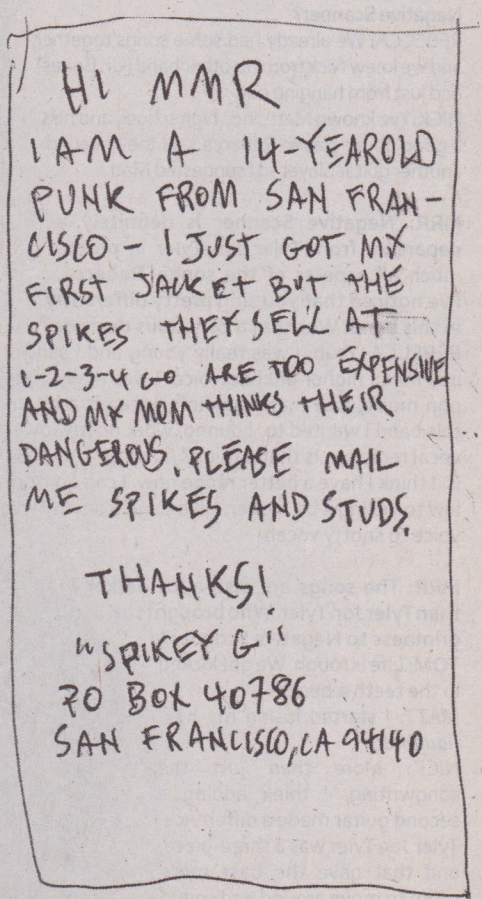
ENDNOTES:

1) I bought a plane ticket to Oklahoma to go hang out with all my friends at Everything Is Not OK. If that makes me a fest punk, I guess I don't care. Roz (who sings for American Hate and organizes EINOK) is interviewed in the magazine this month, alongside the organizers of Manic Relapse and Damaged City fest. Everyone has a different story about why they do what they do and all three weekends are worth your time. I guess we're all fest punks now.

2) I spent the afternoon at Extreme Noise in Minneapolis yesterday. Every punk should be as lucky as the Twin Cities punks—truly one of the best punk record stores on planet earth.

3) Big Bleach, Big Bleach, Big Bleach.

4) I should be getting tests for In School's new EP any day now. Stay tuned to this space for news on Thrilling Living Records. Got some doozies in the works.



Negative Scanner

Chicago's Negative Scanner, consisting of drummer Tom Cassling, bassist Nick Beaudoin, guitarist Matt Revers, and guitarist/vocalist Rebecca Flores, are in the enviable position of having a band that's not easy to pigeonhole. For the past three years, the band has blown away crowds in Chicago and around the US with a tense, aggressive, and sometimes grim take on punk that doesn't fit neatly into any of the various post-punk revivals of the past several years. With two impressive singles and a fantastic debut LP in 2015, the band has plans to hit the west coast and Europe in 2016.

Interview by Jeff Rice. Photos by Rob Karlic, Rebecca Hires, and Ashleigh Dye.

MRR: Prior to this band, Rebecca and Tom were in Tyler Jon Tyler together for several years. How did you guys hook up with Matt and Nick to form Negative Scanner?
REBECCA: We already had some songs together, and we knew Nick from his other band [Uh Bones] and just from hanging out.
NICK: I've known Matt since high school, and he's a good guitar player. Rebecca said they needed another guitar player so I suggested Matt.

MRR: Negative Scanner is definitely a departure from Tyler Jon Tyler in pretty much all aspects of the songs. Rebecca, I've noticed that you sing pretty differently in this band. Was that a conscious decision?
REBECCA: Yeah, I was really young and I sang in a much higher-pitched voice. I was really into pop music, and that really influenced it a lot. In this band I wanted to, I dunno, work on my lower vocal register...Is that a thing? *[laughter]* I think it is. I think I have a better range now. I can go from low to yelling a bit higher. I like to go from my low voice to snotty vocals.

MRR: The songs are also a lot darker than Tyler Jon Tyler. Who brought the grimness to Negative Scanner?
TOM: Life is rough. We got kicked in the teeth a bunch!
MATT: I started losing my hair. *[laughter]*
NICK: More than just the songwriting, I think adding a second guitar made a difference. Tyler Jon Tyler was a three-piece, and that gave the bass more room to move around and sound a bit lighter. Adding another guitar means I can hang out on low end with bass and have the guitars handle the melodies.
TOM: I definitely don't think of the two bands as being musically related. I feel like the only reason that Tyler Jon Tyler even comes up when talking about Negative Scanner is that there was such a short period of time between the two bands. Maybe a two or three month gap at the most.
MATT: When I asked Rebecca what she wanted out of a second guitarist, she said she wanted me to solo over everything...Which is not the case! *[laughs]* I'm not a soloist.
NICK: He's not there yet.
MATT: I don't have the chops.
NICK: Read a book about it.
TOM: Maybe try *Pick Control.*
MATT: When she asked me to play second guitar, I asked Rebecca what she was listening to at the time, and it was a lot of darker, moodier stuff. Also some more aggressive stuff. That's just music I tend to like, so I didn't have to change anything about how I play when I joined.

MRR: One thing I've noticed about your band is that you're one of the only bands that I see just as often at DIY shows as I do in more typical venues like bars. Is that something you've planned, and do you prefer one over the other?
TOM: I think we say no to DIY shows a lot less often that we say no to bar shows.
MATT: It's usually pretty easy to know if a bar show is gonna be shitty, but you don't really know with most DIY spaces. And I've rarely had a bad time at a DIY space. At house shows, people are more likely to just want to see music and hang out.

MRR: Are there any particular DIY spaces that you like playing the most?
REBECCA: There are so many good and different spaces that draw different crowds, so it's always a different experience. And they tend to come and go pretty quickly. But even when you're playing the same spot a second time the show might be completely different.
TOM: I feel like we play better at house shows. Being on the floor with a shitty PA and nothing mic'd is more like what we're used to when we practice.

MRR: Chicago also has this problem where there are almost no all-ages venues that aren't ridiculously expensive to book. Have you had any luck playing an all-ages show at an official venue?
REBECCA: I don't think we've ever even played an all-ages show at a venue. Maybe one that was seventeen and up.

NICK: We played Saki, which is a record store and all-ages, but that was during the day.
REBECCA: We've also played some street festivals. There were children there!
MATT: And they did not like us. *[laughs]*
NICK: The dogs liked us. I remember there was at least one dog that liked us.

MRR: When I first moved to Chicago, there was the Fireside Bowl, and anyone could go there—whether you were fifteen or you were old enough to drink in the bar. I feel like there's been a void that hasn't been filled since that ended. There are groups like Pure Joy and Access/Praxis that have been trying to open all-ages venues, but it seems next to impossible in Chicago.
REBECCA: I wonder if there's ever going be an all-ages venue or anything other than house shows.

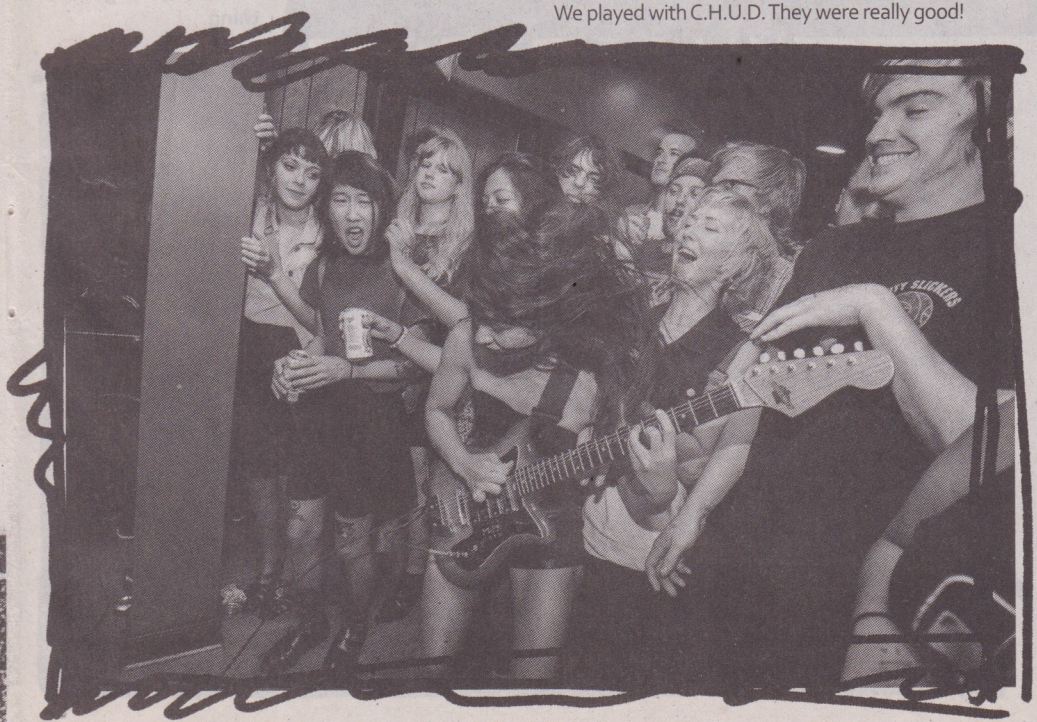
MRR: Is it because Chicago real estate has gotten so expensive?
MATT: Yeah, and licenses for that kind of venue are so expensive that venues might not want to take the risk.

MRR: Speaking of other cities, have you gotten to tour very much in the past few years?
REBECCA: Yeah, we've done a few two-week tours going mostly to the east and south.
MATT: It's difficult to do any longer tours since we all have jobs and we gotta work. We're also not a huge band, so that's something, too.
REBECCA: Our last tour was good, and it was a mix of venues and DIY shows, so that was really cool. We went south to St. Louis, Austin, and New Orleans.

MRR: What was the best city, outside of Chicago, to play in?
NICK: I really love all the cities going south along the Mississippi, but Austin was great. New Orleans, too.
REBECCA: New Orleans was really good on this last tour. It was a house show on a Monday, and we weren't really sure what it would be like, but it was fun. We played right in the living room.
MATT: Do you remember the name of the house? It would be cool to give a shout out.
All: No!
TOM: They were really hospitable and they were on fraternity row of the Tulane campus. It was one where we showed up thinking it might be a dud, but it was great.

MRR: Have you found that the smaller, more off-the-beaten-path towns have been better for shows?
REBECCA: We played Oklahoma City and knew a few of the bands. It seems like their music scene is really tight and a bunch of people came out.
TOM: I also think Bloomington was good. What venue was that?
REBECCA: Magnetic South.

MRR: Is that the venue?
NICK: Yeah. The record label records bands there, too. We played with C.H.U.D. They were really good!



MRR: Were any of the tours or shows bad?
MATT: Yeah, our first tour. It was us and the Wet—another four-person band.
TOM: We set up the tour because we didn't want to wait for a year. We were still a really new band, and we didn't have anything released, the other band didn't have anything released, so it was pretty bleak.
NICK: Yeah, like in St. Louis, we showed up and the promoter was like, "Dude, sorry, I forgot about the show. There's an open mic night. Want to play the open mic?" They wouldn't even let us play the open mic night, so we ended up playing the basement of the open mic night. There were maybe six people there.
REBECCA: We went camping on that tour. That was pretty fun.
NICK: I saw the Milky Way for the first time.
TOM: That was the highlight of that tour.
NICK: I got a piece of garlic stuck under my thumb and it burned for days. But yeah, we rented a huge van that cost a ton of money and came back owing a couple hundred dollars per person.
MATT: It was fun, since it was my first tour, but I was thinking, "Why the fuck would anyone want to do this every year?"

MRR: Was your second tour any better?
MATT: That was the Jeep tour! We hitched a trailer onto my Jeep all wrong and—don't tell my Mom!—the lights on the trailer weren't working. We ended up missing a show because I had to buy a part for the car to make the trailer work.
TOM: We also had people cancelling shows while we were on the road, and we ended up stranded in Indianapolis for two day.
MATT: That was another point where I was like, "Why would people want to do this!?"
REBECCA: And then we had a Milwaukee show fall through...
TOM: I can talk about that!

MRR: Want to name names?
TOM: Nah, I better not do that.
REBECCA: Also, speaking of "off the beaten path"

shows, we had a great show in Athens, Ohio.
But Athens is really hilly, and it took us over an hour just to back the Jeep and trailer out of the driveway of the venue.
MATT: That was easily the most frustrating hour of my life. The most recent tour we did was in the Trouble In Mind Records soccer mom van, and that was like a vacation. It was heaven!

MRR: I heard you're touring Europe. Any details on that yet?
REBECCA: Yeah, in the fall. We have a booking agent to set it up for September. Nothing is set in stone, but it's going to be awesome!

MRR: Now, how will that work, with everyone having a job and Tom owning a guitar repair shop?
TOM: It's scary and possibly financially ruinous but...hopefully worth it? *[laughs]*
MATT: There's a chance I'll lose my job.
REBECCA: Yeah, I'll just cut out of work and hope I have money when I get back.
MATT: It's all gonna be in Euros!
REBECCA: I'll just pay my rent in Euros. *[laughs]*
TOM: I weighed myself at the end of our last tour and I was definitely medically underweight, so yeah, there definitely are consequences to touring.

MRR: Tom, do you have somebody who runs the store when you're on tour?
TOM: I never have in the past, but I've got someone working for me now, so it's a possibility.

MRR: One thing I've noticed about Chicago is that the scene is pretty diverse. You can end up on a four-band bill and none of the bands are the same exact style. Has that been your experience, too?
REBECCA: That's pretty much every show for us in Chicago. I feel like we're either playing with garage bands or hardcore bands. Occasionally some other kinds of rock bands. I think Chicago just has so many bands, especially in the DIY scene. With those shows, it's really a toss-up as to who we're going to be playing with. We don't really book our own shows, we just respond to offers and it's out of our hands and up to whoever's booking the show to get other bands on. With so many bands playing different styles in Chicago, we never know what it's going to be like.

MRR: Yeah, it's been my experience playing DIY shows that you get a lot of people checking you out who would have never gone out of their way to see you at a bar, either because they don't want to or they can't get in.
REBECCA: I think the people who go to DIY shows will go just to see anything, whereas at bars people will only go to see a certain type of band that they know.

NICK: Or the bar has a reputation for booking certain types of bands while the DIY spaces and people who go there are more accepting. They know the bands must have wanted to play there.
REBECCA: And people there are more likely to watch your band instead of just watching the one band they came for.

MRR: Yeah, bars sometimes have followings of people only into one type of music, and that's not always a good thing.

MATT: You get judged way harder.
TOM: Cole's might be the exception.
MATT: There's no cover, and everyone's so drunk by the time you go on that it's a good time! In a good way, I think.
REBECCA: Even if the people at a DIY show are just there to drink, they're still excited to see the bands rather than being like, "I'm just here to drink and some band is playing".
NICK: It's kind of like Wally's World. I like Wally's World, but sometimes people are there just to party, and they don't care who's playing. But it's usually a different social atmosphere at DIY shows.

MRR: So you guys just had an LP come out on Trouble In Mind? How did you end up on that label?
REBECCA: Well, Tom and I have known Bill and Lisa for a long time. We used to go see their band, Cococoma, play at Ronnie's all the time.
TOM: They did a 7" for our old band, Tyler Jon Tyler.
REBECCA: They've also become really good friends of ours over the years.
MATT: They've been super supportive and really great.

MRR: I'm not sure there's a Trouble In Mind sound, but do you feel like you stick out a bit from the other bands on that label?
REBECCA: I think maybe they've become more known as a psych label because of some of their more popular releases, but they're still pretty diverse. Like, they put out that Wax Museums record, and they've put out a ton of stuff from all over the world. I think maybe we're one of the very few punk bands, if I can call us that, on their label. But they've been great.
TOM: Some of the psych reputation might be due to Bill's real rad graphic design. *[laughs]*

MRR: I'm sure being on that label has gotten your record to a lot of people and stores that normally never looked at it.
MATT: And I think the label is really carefully curated, and they only put out stuff they really like, so I think a lot of people, I dunno, subscribe to that label, and maybe we've surprised some of them. But it's been a really positive experience for us. I don't know what it would be like to be on a bigger label, but probably not as good.
TOM: A bigger label wouldn't let you use their soccer mom van to tour in! *[laughs]*

MRR: The soccer mom van is definitely a perk to being on Trouble in Mind. So, are there any other bands that you've encountered through playing around Chicago or touring that you really like and relate to?
TOM: I think all four of us have pretty different tastes in music, but the one band I can think that we all really, really like is Mystic Inane. That's a band we discovered on tour. We played a couple shows with them.

MRR: Where did you play with them?
MATT: In Cleveland at Now That's Class, which was fucking awesome.
REBECCA: And we played Columbus with them at a basement show.
TOM: But we hadn't heard of them before that and ended up getting hooked on them after two shows.
MATT: We really like them and they, uh, told us that they liked us. *[laughs]* I think they like us!
REBECCA: As far as bands that we know, I think Video is a favorite, along with all of their related Austin and Denton bands.

MRR: Like Bad Sports?
REBECCA: And OBN IIIs. We don't sound anything like them, but they're good friends.
MATT: Also, Nots from Memphis and CCTV and their related Hammond, Indiana bands.
REBECCA: We played with Downtown Boys, and that was really fun.
MATT: Institute.
REBECCA: They're also from Austin.
MATT: And your band.

MRR: Hey, I'm not doing this for publicity! I'm just a humble interviewer.
REBECCA: And that band we played with last time at the Mousetrap...Veil, from St. Louis!
MATT: American Hate from Oklahoma City.
REBECCA: Yuze Boys and Nervosas from Ohio.

MRR: Any favorite venues around the country?
TOM: Now, I know this might be polarizing... Some people love it, some people hate it and will hate the city because of it, but personally, I love Now That's Class.
REBECCA: It's great!
MATT: Three thumbs up from me!
NICK: Everyone there either just friggin' hates you and lets you know it or they say "good job."
TOM: Paul rules, that bar rules, and I really like Cleveland. That town is nuts. I've been there when they've had shopping carts full of forties at the show.

MRR: As for future plans, are you working on new songs for a new record?
NICK: We just were until you showed up!

MRR: Well, I fucked that up!
MATT: Do you like Thin Lizzy?

MRR: I do like harmonized guitar leads.
TOM: Well, Matt's been spending a lot of time on ultimate-tabs.com working on his chops.
MATT: Rebecca's been putting in hours at lyricsfreak.com.
REBECCA: Taking notes!

MRR: Besides Thin Lizzy, what else inspires you to write new material?
NICK: I'm not telling.

MRR: You don't want to give away the trade secrets?
NICK: For me, there's nothing specific. I'm not in this band to write lead parts or choose the direction of the band. So when coming up with stuff to play, I use everything from the Phil Collins songs I heard as a child to any punk band that I see in real life. There's nothing in particular, I'd say.
MATT: I like so many different kinds of music that I just try to distill it all into music that I'd like to play and then try to fit it into the band as a whole. But Rebecca writes most of the songs.
NICK: Just to be clear, I don't try to make my bass parts sound like Phil Collins!
MATT: But that stuff influences you.
NICK: It influences me when I dick around on bass!

MRR: So, what role do the Fine Young Cannibals play in your songwriting process?
MATT: How do you know about that!? *[laughs]* We played that CD in the van on tour.
MRR: I was at a show you played at the Burlington and "Good Thing" came on and one of you went nuts.
NICK: That was me. I really love that song. Their big hit, "She Drives Me Crazy," kinda sucks, but they have some older ska songs that are pretty cool. I just remember being young and dancing to "Good Thing" with my dad. It's a great cover of an even greater song.
REBECCA: I like Wire, Bauhaus, and the Fall. That's pretty much it.

MRR: How did your cover of "Bela Lugosi's Dead" work out at that Halloween show you played at that college?
REBECCA: Oh no...
NICK: It didn't go very well. I was way overzealous and trying to play octaves, but I was way too drunk and just got tired.
TOM: I think we covered that song because we thought it would be fun for the college kids at a Halloween show, but I think we just confused them. It's really long, and when you're playing a nine-minute song live and you're totally bombing in front of the crowd, it's pretty rough.
REBECCA: And I was wearing fake blood, but no one thought it was fake blood!

MRR: So, you guys beefed up your reggae chops for nothing?
TOM: I think it's actually a bossa nova beat, not a reggae beat. Anybody got a Casio keyboard to confirm it? We actually already use that beat in one of our songs, "Ambitious People."
MATT: It's a good, creepy song, and we had fun practicing it, but not playing it live.

MRR: Any final thoughts as we conclude the interview?
TOM: It was nice being interviewed by someone we know. The last person who interviewed us was obviously reading up on us on the internet seconds before he would ask us each question. Like, one of his questions was "Why did you name your first album *S/T*? What does 'S slash T' mean?"
REBECCA: I hope I didn't sound mean when I answered that.
TOM: No, you were very diplomatic about it.
MATT: Think of how Henry Rollins would have responded to that question.

MRR: He would have put that guy in his place!
REBECCA: We did have some other ideas for the LP title. We were going to call it *The First Four Years*. Or *The Cure's Greatest Hits*!

Negative Scanner will go on a West Coast tour in April 2016. See negativescanner.bandcamp.com for more information.

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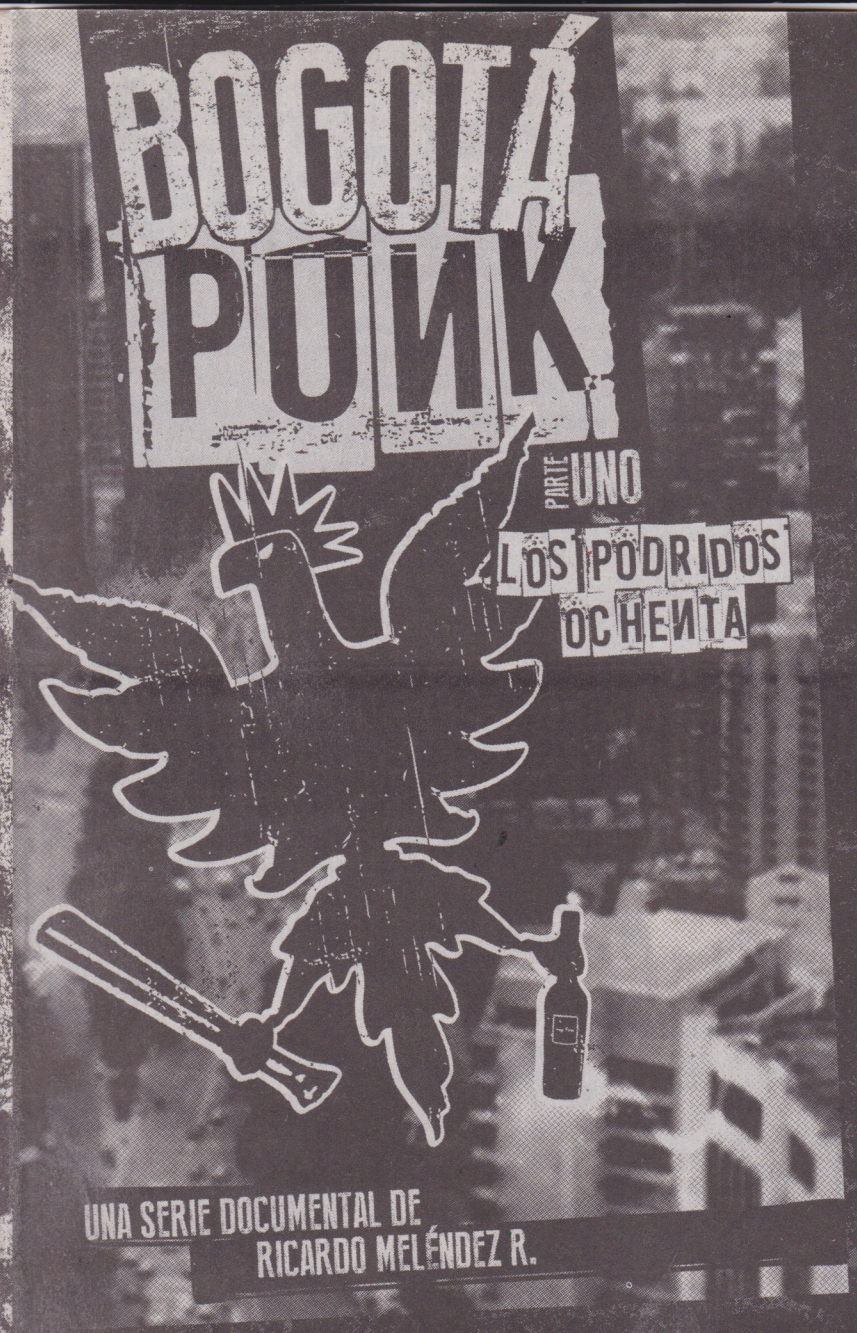


BOGOTÁ PUNK is a planned three-part documentary series on the history of punk in the Colombian capital. We spoke with the director Ricardo Meléndez about his involvement with punk's history and present, the process of making the documentary, and the development of punk and hardcore in Bogotá.

Photos provided by the filmmakers.

MRR: Tell us about yourself, your work, and your relationship with punk.

My name is Ricardo Meléndez, I was born in Bogotá, Colombia, 37 years ago. I've been working as a freelance and DIY audiovisual artist for about 10 years now. I have worked with local punk and hardcore bands in Bogotá, recording shows and making videos. I have also worked in other areas like graffiti and social protest, some wildlife cinematography, and in audiovisual pedagogy. Five years ago I started the internet documentary series *BOGOTÁ PUNK*, and that's what I've been up to lately. My relationship with punk started 24 years ago when I was studying at a military school; a classmate lent me some cassettes. The one that impacted me the most, because of its lyrics and music, was a mixtape that had an album from La Pestilencia, the first punk band from Bogotá, and another from La Polla Records. From there on, I adopted punk as a means of expressing myself, and it has been an influence in my lifestyle and work to this day.

MRR: Tell us, what is punk to you?

Punk as a musical genre has been a great part of my life's soundtrack. It's the kind of music that I like the most among many other genres, but beyond that, to me, it is basically a means, not an end in itself. It is a means of expression that allows me to face the day-to-day with strength and with a critical vision of what happens in the country and the world. Every day I recharge my energies with music; it's part of my lifestyle. As a human being, punk allows me and others to express ourselves and to vent through the music, the clothing style, and other expressions that have developed around it, like literature, graffiti, graphic design, and audiovisuals. I don't try to "be punk," I don't pretend to stop being myself based on preconceived outlines and models, I try to be consequent with my ideas, to act how I think.

***MRR: Talk to us more about the documentary series* BOGOTÁ PUNK.**

BOGOTÁ PUNK was born with the intention of documenting the hardcore punk movement from its arrival in Bogotá to the present. It is also an attempt to recover the graphic and audiovisual material that has been produced in the hardcore punk scene in Bogotá over the past 30 years and in this way to recover the historical memory of the city's punk counterculture.

The series is set up to be freely downloaded from the internet, and from the beginning I've been working on it based on the Do-It-Yourself principles of independent work. The series is composed of three episodes; the first one is titled *Los podridos ochenta* (The Rotten '80s) and it came out last year. This first episode begins with the first broadcast of punk music in the city in 1979 and ends with the disbandment of the pioneering band and the decline of the movement ten years later. All of this was happening while Colombia was facing the beginnings of the drug trafficking phenomenon and its violence and the internal conflict between the state and four subversive groups that, adding to the poverty affecting more than 60% of Bogotá's inhabitants, provided little promising landscape for most Colombians. The second episode is currently in the preproduction stage. In it we will see features other than music, which was the backbone of the first episode. This episode's title is *Degeneración X* (Degeneration X). It covers from 1989 to 1999, and in it you can see various themes like the politicization of punk, the influence of globalization, the division of punk and hardcore into two different scenes, the active participation of women, and the popularization of the movement that's noticeable with the emergence of more than 60 bands—a significant increase from the three bands that existed in the '80s. The third episode covers the period beginning in the 21st century and the script is not drafted yet; we have an outline, but it's still not very developed.

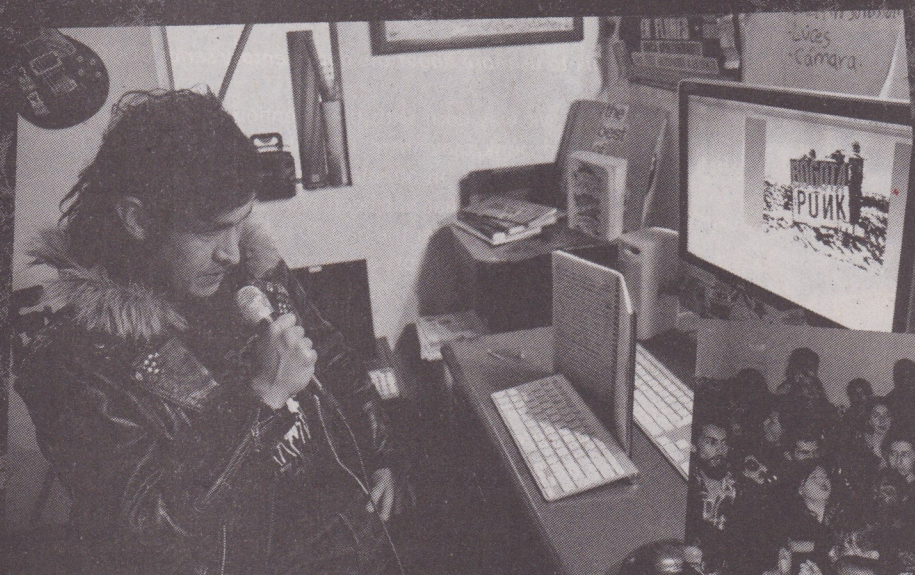
MRR: How did punk get to Colombia, and how was the Colombian society at that time?

The oldest references to punk in Colombia that I have found are from the late '70s in Bogotá (the capital) and in Medellín; in the capital with the broadcasting of the record *Never Mind the Bollocks...* by the Sex Pistols on the radio show Adult Rock and in Medellín when the rock band Crash mentioned the Clash as one of its musical influences. It was in Medellín where the first self-denominated punk band Complot came out, which was then followed by dozens of bands, and the movement started developing around them. It is said that punk got there through young men from poor neighborhoods who were drafted for the

mandatory military service for the international Sinai Battalion as soldiers and they came in contact with other European and American young soldiers, and that way they brought the first records and magazines to their cities. In Bogotá, the movement was smaller, and it was only in the '90s when it reached similar dimensions as the scene in Medellín. Nowadays those are the two most important scenes, and through time punk has reached every corner of the country. There are young punks and bands in almost every major city in the country and in many smaller cities and towns. It was a difficult time for Colombian society because of the violence and poverty.

MRR: Why was punk so well received in a country so socially, culturally and economically different, as compared to the countries where it originated, like England and the United States?

Human beings have a natural need to communicate and express themselves, to rebel, to express nonconformity and their preferences; punk gave young people around the world in that time the opportunity to express themselves, and they did it in their own way and style and within their possibilities. If British youth had their reasons to declare their apathy towards the establishment, Colombian youth, and not only Colombian, but also from all over in the third world, had more than enough reasons to dissent. I would say that is not an imitation, but an adaptation. Colombia is a very problematic country. It's not easy to be young in Colombia, especially if you live in a marginalized neighborhood—violence, repression, war, unemployment, drugs, poverty, and the lack of opportunities. Through punk, people found a way to blow off steam and express their nonconformist feelings against a system that overwhelms and denigrates everyone who lacks economic power. From what I've read, young people in England bought their musical instruments with their unemployment benefits. We didn't have those kinds of benefits here, so young people began to make their own instruments and raw recordings, always with the innate DIY spirit, slowly finding its own style: Colombian-style punk. I don't think that Colombian tango bands are bad because they're not from Argentina or Uruguay or that the cumbia from Mexico or Argentina is bad cumbia because it's not from Colombia, music is a universal language.



MRR: Which are the pioneering punk bands from Bogotá, and what has happened with them?

For me, the pioneering bands are, without a doubt, La Pestilencia and Morgue. La Pestilencia formed in 1986. Their hardcore punk and metal sound was violent and blunt and their lyrics are very Colombian. They later left for Medellín when three of the four members moved there, and now they are in Los Angeles. They don't sound so punk anymore, but I think they're still very good. The original lineup later formed other bands that would later become rock icons in Bogotá and nationally, like Neurosis, Los Aterciopelados and La Derecha. Morgue has a hardcore punk sound and lyrics about social and political criticism and life in the city. This is the band that lasted the longest in Bogotá. They were together for 22 years, played hundreds of concerts to support social causes, many of them free, in colleges, schools and community halls. I always thought they were a band that never lost its essence—always fronted by the guitarist and vocalist Ever Tovar, from 1988 until his death in 2010. Out of respect for Ever and for what Morgue was to city punk, the band ended. The bassist became a part of other punk projects. As for the drummer, I have no news on what he's currently doing.

There was also a band called SS (Sin Salida) that began playing in mid '89, released a demo, and disbanded that same year. Years later, two members regrouped the band with other musicians. They were more influenced by NYHC, straightedge, and a right-wing mentality that manifested in their lyrics on social cleansing and support to military forces, among other related topics. With them came the split between punk and hardcore that had always been part of the same scene, giving rise to what became known as SBHC (Santa Fe de Bogotá Hardcore).

MRR: What did the members of the first bands and their audiences do in their daily lives during the early years of punk in Colombia?

I personally didn't experience that first stage, but what I've gathered from those who were around in the '80s is that the scene was mostly young people between 15 and 25 and mostly from the first, second, and third social strata (Colombian society is divided in economic strata from first through sixth. The first is the poorest and the sixth is richest). They were basically students, workers, and unemployed youth. It was mostly male—there were very few women until the mid-'90s. There were also some bands from the upper strata, but very few. That would change in the second half of the '90s.

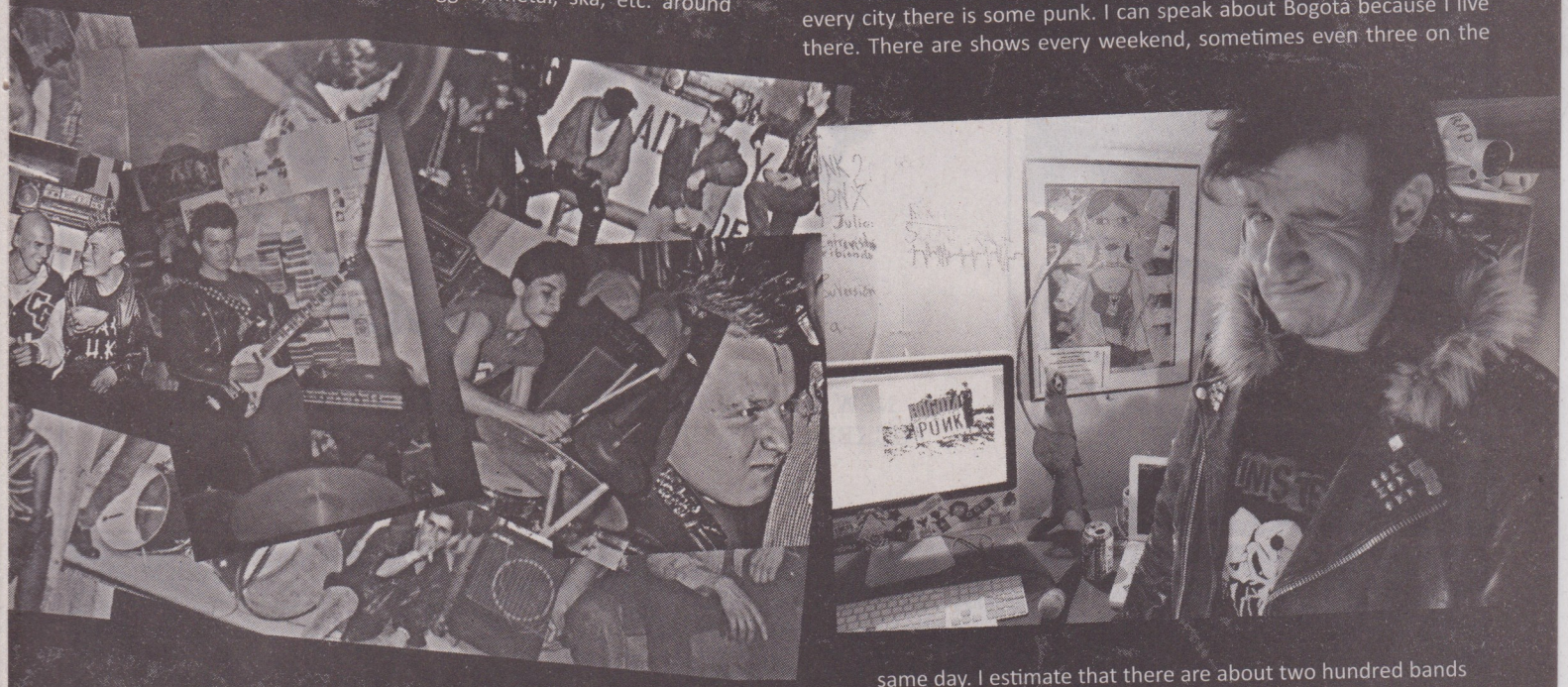
MRR: How was the relationship with drugs?

Punk is not a homogeneous way of thinking. There can even be contradictory stances. Some groups used to criticize the use of drugs and drug trafficking and its influence in society. Others used to defend using drugs but criticized drug trafficking. Either way, the issues were present in their lyrics; drug trafficking, together with the war against drugs, have filled this country with a lot of money, weapons and blood,

with terrible consequences for the Colombian people. Colombian punks sing about these things. Personally, I believe that drug use should be normalized and that the war on drugs should end. That's why I support the cannabis movement in Colombia.

MRR: What relationship did HC punk have with other subcultures in the city?

The three big urban subcultures that developed in Bogota were punk, metal, and rap, and they shared a common space. There was an area known as *Las Casetas* in Avenue 19 where the pioneers of these genres would go looking for music from other countries that was hard to find back then. In the beginning, punks used to do shows together with the metal scene, but it seems like punk's violent behavior broke that union. Nowadays it's pretty normal to find shows where groups of different genres perform, like punk, hip-hop, reggae, metal, ska, etc. around



common issues like conscientious objection against mandatory military service, decriminalization of small amounts of marijuana for personal use, and international workers day, among others. Regarding skinheads, the first skinhead bands were formed by former members of the punk scene. They were environmentalists with whom events for common causes were organized, like the struggle against bullfighting and the abolition of the use of cars pushed by animals.

MRR: How was the musical production of punk in the '80s and '90s?

In the '80s, there were only three bands, and there was little produced, only two demo tapes and a vinyl LP. There was an unnamed demo from La Pestilencia, the demo *Antimoda* from SS, and the album *La Muerte... un Compromiso de Todos*, also from La Pestilencia. That, for me, is one of the best records in the history of Latin American punk.

By the '90s, the arrival of new technologies facilitated the production of new works, and the bands that came out in that time were able to easily surpass the poor production from the '80s. They produced various works in different formats like cassette, vinyl and CD, like the LP *El Bogotazo* by Eskoria, Demencia Libertaria, and Polikarpa y sus Viciosas. There have been attempts to create labels, but they haven't gotten that far. Basically, DIY is the main approach for bands to release music.

MRR: In this first part of Colombian punk, the presence and participation of women seemed almost non-existent. How has women's participation been in the Bogotá punk scene?

In the first stage of punk, there was little presence of women. Musically, women were absent, as far as we could research. There were women in the punk scene, but they were very few. By 1990, women began to take part of the musical movement. Rocio Cajamarca, with her band Demencia Libertaria, was the first woman to play and record hardcore punk in Bogotá. There was a woman from Practicas Extramuros, whom I haven't been able to locate and whose name I don't know. Mireya from D.S.A. (Depresion Siquica Aguda). Paola Loaiza played in a band called Justicia Natural with some skinhead and later she would join Polikarpa y sus Viciosas, the first all-female band, and they still play. There have been and there are bands formed by women all over the city, like Retaliacion, Sin Pudor, Maniatikatz, Ginger y sus Toxicos, Antidiktatur, Comemierdas, and others that I forget. I have attended a couple of feminist festivals called Ladyfest that bring together bands of various genres organized by young punk girls, which is wonderful. Punk is a space of freedom of expression and equality, a vindication of freedom.

MRR: How is the punk movement currently in Colombia?

Right now, there are a variety of interesting scenes in the country. The two main scenes continue to be in Bogotá and Medellín, but in almost every city there is some punk. I can speak about Bogotá because I live there. There are shows every weekend, sometimes even three on the same day. I estimate that there are about two hundred bands in the country, there are collectives that work around political and social issues, and even here, in the capital, there are a couple of places you can go to listen to punk. That wasn't the case before. Musically, there are a lot of new things being produced, even experimentally, and new records are constantly released. Starting a few years ago, international bands have been brought, either by punks who get organized and bring those bands or by government free rock fests. Bands like Misfits, Exploited, Gatillazo, Adicts, Dead Kennedys, Dos Minutos, Siniestro Total, Varukers, and GBH, among others, have visited Colombia. There are also punk radio stations and radios shows and collectives that work with other sectors around social issues and claims. May Day also became a custom—along with other collectives, punks participate in the worker's day march every year, with music, graffiti and performances that generally end up with confrontations with the police. And, like I was saying, while corruption, state terrorism, and the interests of multinationals over those of the people prevail in Colombia, and children continue dying of hunger, there will always be the protesting voice of punks against all this crap. So, just as the situation in the country and the continuity of the political and social model prevail, there will be Colombian punk. Punk came to Colombia to stay.

The first part of the BOGOTÁ PUNK *series,* Los podridos ochenta, *will be available for download soon. More info at bogotapunkdocumental.wix.com.*

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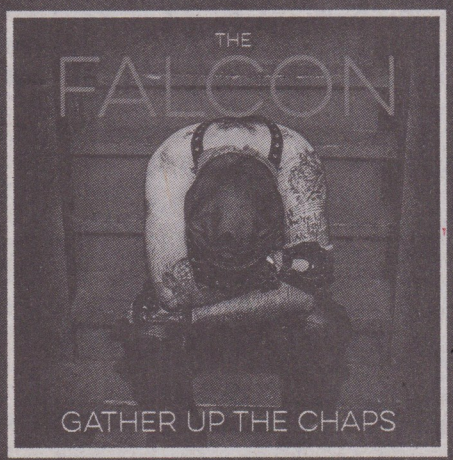
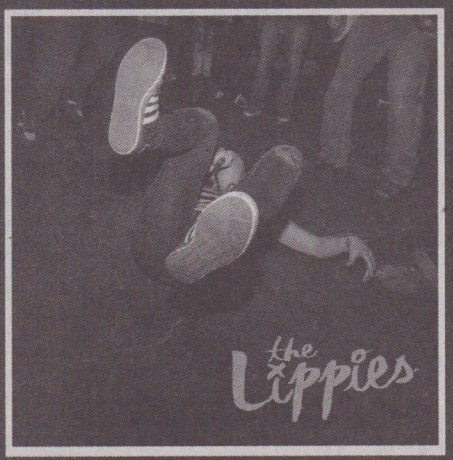


The Falcon
"Gather Up The Chaps"
Members of Lawrence Arms + Alkaline Trio + Dave Hause



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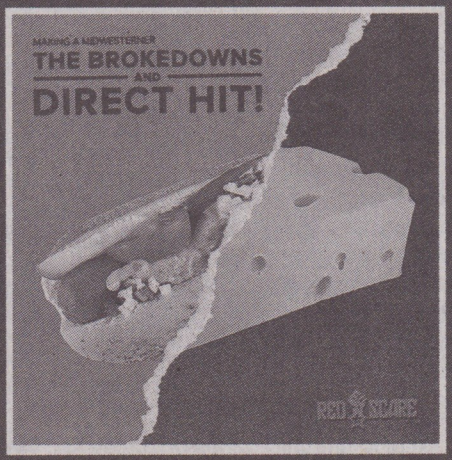

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The Pessimists are a catchy punk band from São Paulo, Brazil, that formed in 2014. When I first heard the band, I felt an instant connection with their simple three-chord hooks and one-minute songs. Despite being another hemisphere away, I knew this band was on a different level with their honesty and strange ability to instill their audience with this weird, drugged-out feeling of suicidal happiness. I felt that I had to learn everything about the band, convince them to play live shows, and try to understand the strange mechanics behind their in-calculated madness. The band also has a strong artistic aesthetic and personal dynamic: A 40-something year old, Farofa, on guitar with his two former, younger employees, Nathalia and Camila (drums and bass, respectively) playing together and coexisting as friendly comrades. In anticipation of their upcoming full-length LP and US tour, the Pessimists explain further.

THE PESSIMISTS

Interview and introduction by Nick Candela.
Photos provided by Mateus Mondini.

MRR: Please tell us how the band started and how you all knew each other.

Farofa: In 2007, I used to work for a rolling papers company and quit. Then I visited the store one day in 2009 and there was Nathalia, listening to northern soul and wearing a Discharge shirt. I thought, "Things changed here..." We talked a little about music, and I realized that we had some friends in common. At that time I was already making plastic art, had no steady job from nine to five. The demand for my art had increased, and I started to do collages with resin, and I reached the conclusion that after all that time doing everything by myself that I needed an assistant. I woke up one day and posted on Facebook, looking for someone who wakes up early, likes art, and was straightedge (because I was high enough for both people). A lot of people made fun of this, but Nathalia wrote me saying that she knew the right person and recommended Camila. Despite our age differences (I was 37 and they were 20/23), it worked perfectly! I really appreciate that it happened the way it did, and it has kept us as friends since then.

Mila: Hmmm, well, I don't really wake up early... but it totally worked out! At that time, I already had a huge connection with Natha, cause we used to play in a band called Vítima together, and I feel that I always kinda knew Farofa, because he's a hardcore celebrity over here. He doesn't like to admit that, but it's true. I have also always been a fan of his band, Garage Fuzz, so I remember being super shy at the first day I got there to talk to him in person, but it was cool.

We ended up talking about art, skateboarding, and hardcore punk, of course! He ended up just giving me, like, five t-shirts of old Argentinean bands I love, some rare old tapes, and old straightedge fanzines. How could that not work out?

Natha: I knew Mila through an ex-boyfriend. We were always at the same gigs, but I wasn't as social as I am now. One day we were at a gig together and started to talk, and I was starting to learn how to play drums, and Mila always wanted to play in an all-girl band, so I called my friend Gigi and we started Vítima. We all became friends just like that, and it was super easy since we just clicked. I was working at a "420" store, and like Farofa said, we met there, but the funny thing is that I didn't know anything about his work as an artist or any of his bands.

MRR: What was the motivation behind starting the band and writing the songs? What are the band's influences, both musical and other?

Farofa: In early 2011, selling my art wasn't going so well. I ended up opening a store with a friend because the art wasn't being sold. It was before the revival of fanzines in Brazil, and we were selling records, skate decks to collectors, old magazines and fanzines, and some new stuff, too. Nathalia was working with us at the store and in the end it was the three of us always hanging out, and she mentioned she was starting to play drums in a band with Camila on bass, Vítima. I remember I said that one day we would start a band together with minimal drums and three-chord riffs...we laughed, and they must have thought I was crazy! The next year, I bought a guitar after 20 years without playing, and in 2014 I asked if they wanted to start that project. I made shitloads of songs in the beginning of the year, Camila sent lyric ideas, we put the voices together, and we practiced only two times before the demo recording. Natha had the freedom to change the structures and rhythm, and we cut the boring part of starting a band by only practicing a little bit, and we recorded one demo of six songs super fast. We knew that Nathalia would be out on tour with her band Rakta for a few months, and after that she would move to Argentina, so we kinda decided that Pessimists would only exist with the three of us, no scabs.

And I think it's hard to categorize just one style of influences, cause we came from different eras. But the initial idea was meant to be more punk rock, raw and minimalist with no crazy stuff or much virtuosity.

Mila: I definitely thought Farofa was fucking around about the idea of the band, cause we could barely hold our own instruments, but later on, when he came with this project idea, and I read the first lyrics he brought—*"A lot of surfers smoking crack and old people running healthy / Let's get rid of the summer"*—I said I was down right away. We discussed the influences, how we wanted it to sound, and what kind of lyrical ideas we wanted. I have a hard time pointing to some specific bands as an influence, but it was a mix of the spirit of old SoCal bands, the negativity of post-punk, and the stupidity of pop punk. Then, I sent him some ideas of lyrics I had and we practiced a few times at his art studio on small amps. Later on we invited Natha to record. She made a few last-minute changes, and we recorded the next day. It was super chill, and we had a lot of fun following our own schedule, and this "no live shows" rule we created. We really thought we would never play live because no one would like it, and here we are, headed up to a big tour in the USA with our bros from Sem Hastro.

Natha: Months before I left for the Rakta US tour, we finished everything on a crazy fast schedule. It was wild, but all the pieces fell together.

MRR: How did the three of you initially get involved in punk as young kids in São Paulo and Santos?

Farofa: I used to listen to metal in the beginning of the '80s. When I was thirteen, I started to surf and later skateboard, and at that point skateboarding was connected to punk, and there were always various bands playing at competitions. I had an older friend that used to send IRC's to get fast answers of bands abroad and was always receiving fanzines. One day in 1986 he came to me with the Armageddon record Silencio Fúnebre and said, "Man, forget about these thrash metal bands, this is way more rad," and that's how I got into the Brazilian punk rock world. The *Ataque Sonoro* compilation probably was the next step.

Natha: My first contact with punk was from my high school partner. When we first met, I

thought he was a dick, but then we had to do group work together, and I started to like him. He always had his headphones on, so I asked what he was listening to, and it was Asta Kask, Discharge, the Adicts, and I loved it. So I went back to my house and started searching the web. Then I started going to some gigs and started meeting people and got more involved with punk.

Mila: I think that rock'n'roll is not really in Brazil's blood, but people listen to many different genres of national songs in general. My dad used to listen to some rock music, and I had some interest in it. I was always looking at his records and listening to his old tapes. I think I bought my first punk CD (yeah, fuck the '00s) in a shitty record store close to my neighborhood, and after that I was always there trying to get into new stuff, searching for "new" bands. At that time I was ten, and I read Pedro Carvalho's website about straightedge and vegetarianism in a political way, and I thought, "Wow, that's sick!" but it was all at home, I had no clue that there was cool stuff going on outside. I used to work with my mom, and she put me in contact with this guy who worked for her supplier, and he took me to the first Verdurada Fest (it was one of the biggest underground hardcore punk fests with political bias in the '90s, and it's still in the game nowadays) where I got in touch with underground, feminism, straightedge, and all the real shit.

MRR: Farofa, you have employed both Mila and Natha in the past. How are they as employees? What is your attitude as a boss? Talk to us about the lyrics to "Robotics in Service." You talking shit?

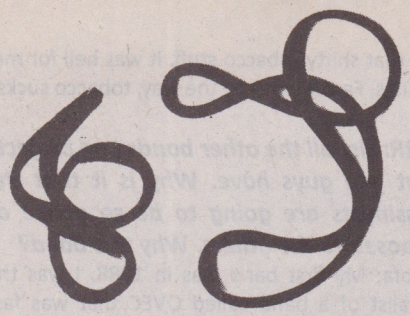
Farofa: I think I was never like a "boss" or at least I tried to not act like the normal pattern. I worked on that first boom of the internet in the end of the '90s, so I was from that generation that got a computer and went home, saying to the bosses "I work better at home, listening to loud music and wearing pajamas doing my own schedule," so I've never seen myself in that place, acting like a real boss. I always wanted them to have their own lives, and I was asking them all the time if they needed some time for their personal stuff, if they wanted to leave early or stay at home. I think I've always supported Camila and Natha in making their own art and music. The lyrics of "Robotics in Service" have to do with wasting your life behind some office desk. "Clocking time" and living a life in a cage of a company because they buy your time for a shitty salary. I am basically just talking shit. Who needs to have a boss destroying your dreams and fucking with your self-esteem to keep you controlled into a routine that will only satisfy their interests and not yours?

Mila: Natha and I totally agree that Farofa rules. He was the best no-boss ever, our boss-friend! To work with him was more like going to meet up with your friend and ending up having a productive day and psychologist therapy session at the same time. Always fun!

Natha: Farofa saved me from the 420 store. I don't even smoke, and I had to sell that shitty tobacco stuff. It was hell for me. Thanks, Farofa! And by the way, tobacco sucks!

MRR: List all the other bands and projects that you guys have. Why is it that the Pessimists are going to be so active as opposed to the others. Why this band?

Farofa: My first band was in 1988. I was the vocalist of a band called OVEC that was fast hardcore with lyrics in Portuguese, and after that I sang for a few months for a band that was moderately well-known called Psychic Possessor until they broke up. Then me and the bass player of Psychic Possessor, Fabricio, and the drummer of OVEC, Daniel, were listening a lot of Celibate Rifles, the Saints, and Hüsker Dü, and we started a power trio in 1991 called Garage Fuzz, which is the band we still play in. We've been active for 25 years. In 1993, I recorded an album with a band called Safari Hamburgers, and in 1995 I also was part of the first line-up of Paura, and we recorded the first album together. I also have some lo-fi/experimental projects. I see the



Pessimists as a project with less stress than all the bands I had been in before, and I think that some people like it because it is simple and honest with no aspiration of being genius, going straight to the point.

Natha: My first band was Vítima. Then my second band was Rakta, which is actually active even though the guitar player isn't with us anymore. With Pessimists, I knew it would be something with no strings attached. I like Mila, I like Farofa, I like playing, so why not? For me, it's just about playing with my friends, and I really like to laugh about the lyrics, the "sad but true" style of Mila and Farofa's minds.

Mila: I first started singing in a powerviolence band, and when that band broke up, Natha's ex-boyfriend invited me to sing in the Pushmongos, a band they wanted to start. That's when I first had a connection with Natha, and we ended up forming Vítima later. I had never played bass before, and it was a great experience to play in an all-girl band with my best friends. A few months later, Kalota, the singer of Futuro (ex-B.U.S.H.) was quitting the band and suggested that I take his place. We've been an active band ever since. I also had a few projects after which didn't last long. Now I want to play drums on my first project as a drummer, called Lunar Rat.

The difference with the Pessimists is that we never wanted to be a band. I was working with Farofa as an art assistant at that time, and Natha was always with us, so we already had a strong connection, and we never thought we would actually do real band stuff one day, so that's why people's response to the project was so positive. It was sincere and raw, and we hope to never lose that essence. We never made plans or stressed out about it, things just happened mostly because of people's support, and being up our asses to do stuff!

MRR: Are you guys truly pessimists in your normal lives? In what ways and why?

Farofa: No! Contrariwise! I think we are optimists and happy in a certain way. Actually, the name has to do with that image of the human being always thinking positive, even when he's doing some shit and watching the world fall apart. I think that it's important to be realistic with the world that only gets more decadent and insane. I think that most of the time this makes people see themselves as pessimists.

Natha: I used to think that I was a pessimist, but now I think I am getting super positive. I know life sucks, but great stuff is happening to me nowadays.

Mila: I think pessimism is part of human nature, we naturally carry a little bit of this in our essence. I would say I am realistic but in my personal life I always try to turn my actions into positive stuff instead of being a pessimist who just complains (believe me, I tend to do that!). It's hard, but we always try to balance our energy and transform it into productive stuff. Natha and Farofa are the people who break my balls the most and support me to produce my own stuff, and I feel lucky to have them in my life and have a band together called the Pessimists because it's totally the opposite when it's related to our personal experience.

MRR: What do you want the rest of the world to know about Brazil?

Farofa: That Brazil has this beautiful aura of being a tropical country, but deep inside things are not that pretty. It's a contrast of beauty with lots of injustice.

Natha: YouTube viral videos with some good remix versions. Fruits. And of course, some awesome bands. Here, everything is twice as complicated, twice as expensive, and it is where we have big problems, a dark future, anger and rage, punk bands rule and have cool material to write about...

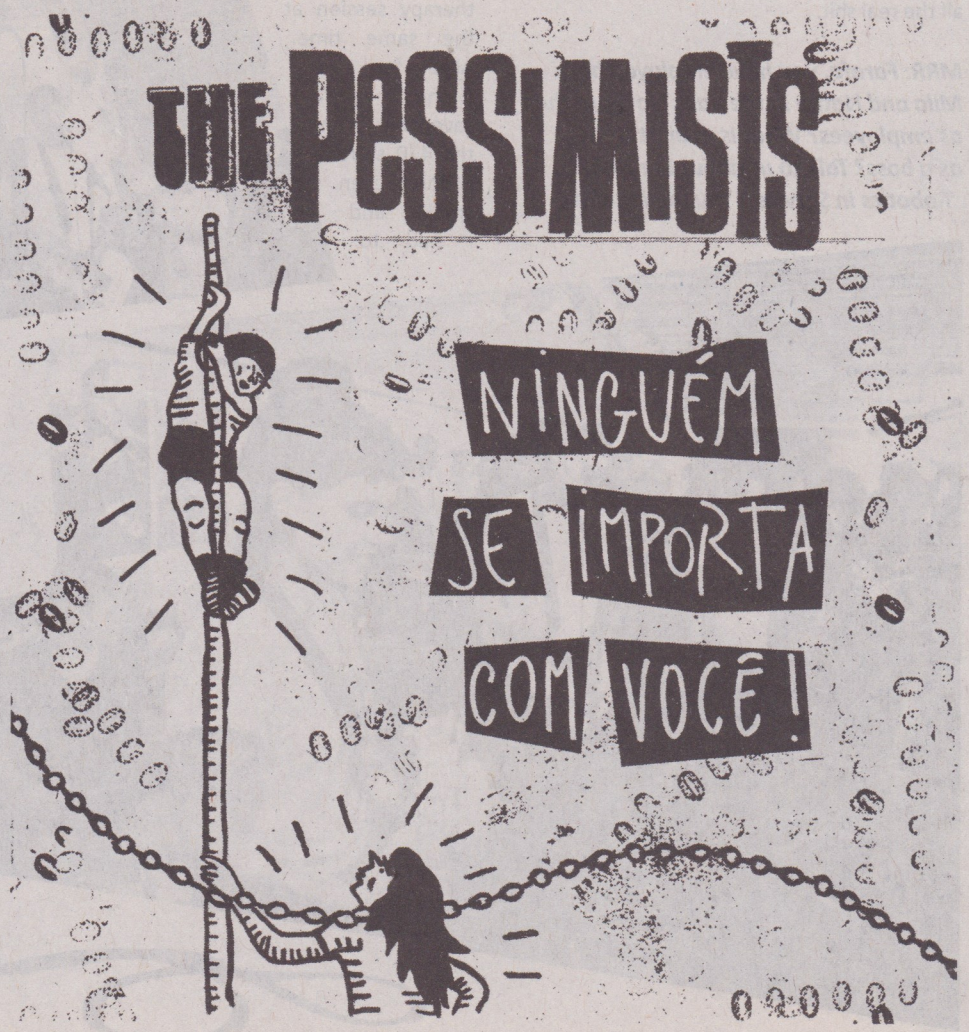
Mila: Basically what they said. Brazil is not what people abroad always expect, the vacation paradise. Of course we have beautiful landscapes, warm people, sick fruits, and awesome cultural local stuff, but it is a hard society with strong relations—mostly very poor in respect to each other, especially to the girls and woman. Well, there's no jungle in São Paulo and people don't play with monkeys, it's pure chaos and concrete around, very depressing. A good thing is that Brazilians always find a way to laugh in the most miserable moments. Sure, there's a lot of talented stuff related to punk and independent production going on here that should be seen by the rest of the world.

MRR: What are you anticipating for your USA tour in April? What are some things you want to see and experience?

Farofa: I think that first of all we just want to play, because we never thought we would make a tour or even play a show. We want to meet new bands, make new friends, and spread optimism out to everyone.

Natha: We're touring the USA in April with high expectations and no money. I am expecting to have lots of fun and play in some shitty basements to a bunch of punk kids.

Mila: Yeah, we're definitely going with no money but full of joy to offer. It will be my first time playing in the USA, and I expect to play shitty crazy shows, to have long drives with different landscapes and to have funny moments with



rednecks on the road, to eat maple donuts, see girls and trans girls in the pit, make new friends, and to know new cool bands.

MRR: What, in your opinions, does punk lack?
Farofa: I think that in the last decades punk is still evolving ideologically.
Natha: In São Paulo? More good all-female bands and people taking care of their own business.
Mila: In São Paulo, I would say it does lack respect to other people's productions. And maybe a new dynamic, because the scene doesn't seem to be that interesting anymore over here. There are very few new people coming and participating, starting bands... especially girls, it's a bummer! Outside São Paulo, it is less judgemental—we don't have to wear a fucking leather jacket to know about punk music, you poseurs!

MRR: Talk about the philosophy with respect to Pessimists' songwriting, recording, and performing. Why do you choose this path?
Farofa: We want to keep it spontaneous. Composing, writing lyrics, and practicing are no pressure, it always comes naturally.
Mila: Like we said, everything was super easy between us. We had no massive practices, no band duties, no worries at all. We had the idea, got together, spent a few days composing, and that's it. I think for these new songs on the LP it was the same. Farofa and I both wrote the music and came up with lyrics and Natha played the songs in this short process we had before recording. I kinda enjoy this dynamic. I think that the Pessimists are totally the true believers of anti-work and anti-business—we truly put into practice what our lyrics talk shit about, so it wouldn't be different in respect to our actions with the band, with ourselves especially. It's about having a good time together and putting some of our crazy shitty ideas out. I hope at least this essence can always be kept.

MRR: Everyone in Pessimists is an artist in different ways. Can you all please talk about your work, how you started, and its personal importance to you? Is the band an extension of this art or a part of it in any way?
Farofa: I'm self-taught and started to understand what art was because of my connection to the surf, skate, and punk scenes that I had in the end of the '80s making fanzines, show posters, covers of demo tapes of the bands I played in. These were all made between 1987 and 1993. I had no idea what I was doing...it was a bunch of fragments to kill the boredom. The punk and hardcore album covers were always my big influence. Winston Smith collages, John Yates, magazines like Punchline and Maximum Rocknroll, of course. It all was a punch in the face, but in 1994 I started to listen Iceburn

and had contact with Rich Jacobs' art. I think at that moment I changed my way of seeing art because he mixed drawings with collages, some simple and strong traces and some stuff like textures. At the end of the '90s Thomas Spiccolli changed my idea of seeing and making art. I've taken some more years to have my first art show as a "plastic artist," and that was in 2004. I keep doing fanzines like I was younger, giving and trading and giving people some of my original art that could be sold in galleries for a higher price. I've always had the conscience that I couldn't let go of my roots and where I came from because they put me where I am. And I see the Pessimists as a collage, for sure!
Natha: I don't really care about the art scene, but I care about art in punk, I always loved arts and crafts and DIY stuff, and punk is all of that for me.

Now I find myself in love with embroidery but since I get really serious and study this embroidery shit at a government program for poor and retired people in Argentina (yes, I'm the youngest person there), I never get the time to practice as much as I would like, but it's my passion—embroidery freak!
Mila: I was never an artistic kid, I had no extraordinary talent at all. I was always going to some "underground" art galleries to see new artists' work, and I thought it was cool, but I've never imagined myself capable of producing such things. I was already in the punk scene and had made some feminist fanzines but nothing crazy, all I had was this punk/handmade/DIY and revolutionary world as a reference of what I wanted. All of the sudden I decided I was going to study graphic design. Then I started to make collages, but I've always felt insecure about it and kept it to myself. During my second semester I started to work with Farofa, and then my brain went upside down because he gave me a different perspective. I'd say that working with a self-taught artist brought me more experience than years in college! Yeah, I think hardcore punk is my biggest influence in art, even in my academic work. In my last year of college, I did this big research project about art in punk and made an interactive physical book about the actual hardcore punk scene.

Now I basically do some shitty drawings, collages with mixed techniques, and also digital jobs for punk related stuff like band logos, posters, and t-shirts, or other unrelated stuff for money (all that boring shit). I still have a lot to discover, improve, and define, but I have more autonomy about what I want and which choices I have, and I cannot see myself in a different area right now. I don't know if the band itself is an extension of our art but for sure it's one of our biggest connections. The fact is that art is in our lives 100% of the time, and we bring that to the band as well, to our moments together.

MRR: GG Allin or Crass?
Farofa: Lisa Suckdog and Flux of Pink Indians.
Mila: Fuck yeah, first GG Allin album! Natha and I used to cover "Don't Talk to Me" in our first band together. We tried to play it live while Limp Wrist was touring Brazil and we totally failed. At least people had fun pogoing to the wrong song...
Natha: Mila, I didn't tell you, but I jammed with Gigi a few months ago and we finally got the whole song almost right!

MRR: What material do you have available? Any stuff we can look forward to?
Mila: Nada Nada Discos will be putting a new LP out in time for the USA tour. There will also be a repress of the old demo tape available too. We're making more plans for maybe doing some crazy "artsy" limited tape with a live recording for the tour because we all work with art, and we love to do this exclusive handmade stuff. Let's see if we can make it on time!

The Pessimists are set to tour the US with Sem Hastro in April 2016. Listen at theepessimists.bandcamp.com.

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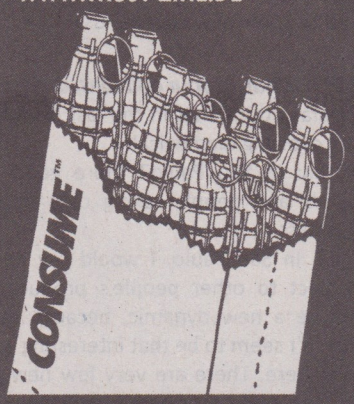

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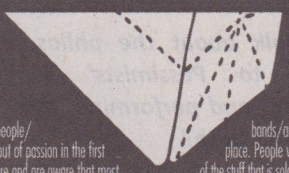


We like to meet people/ bands/art/sport/etc. that do what they do out of passion in the first place. People who believe in a underground culture and are aware that most of the stuff that is sold nowadays under that flag is total crap only made to make money. And, if you feel you can write and relate, get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words:

"NEVER MIND WHAT THEY'RE SELLING- IT'S WHAT YOU ARE BUYING"

HEARTFIRST RECORDS

Not too long after Filip Fuchs sadly passed away, my friend Flo contacted me about an interview Filip had done with him for Filip's zine, Hluboká Orba, and he suggested we print it in MRR. My first thoughts were something along the lines of how tragic it is when the projects of an inspiring and active person can just remain unfinished when they die; the fruits of their passion suspended as their loved ones try to grieve and move on. My second thought was "Flo has never been interviewed in MRR?" Based in Berlin/Munich, he's been active in the international punk scene for 30 years, from the early days playing in SQUANDERED MESSAGE to the HeartFirst label to his activity and connection to the "Network of Friends," as well as contributing to MRR since the late '80s! Flo is one of the more genuine and thoughtful people I've met in this punk life, and anyone else that knows him would surely tell you the same. Read on for the unique and seasoned perspectives of these long-active punk scene veterans.

Introduction by Matt Badenhop. Interview by Filip Fuchs. Photos provided by Flo.

MRR: I have hardly ever read any interviews with you about your label. In fact, the only one I found was from *Ox* magazine, when your label was only 10 years old. Now you've been active for more than 25 years and you've released more than 50 records. Are label people less interesting to talk to about hardcore/punk and other issues than musicians?

There have been some interviews over the years, but not as many as you'd think. But I can't complain, because zine culture is pretty much dying. Besides the interviews you mentioned, there have been lengthy interviews in printed zines such as *Three Cords*, *Trust*, and *Turnitdown* (not really a zine but a website). Personally, I think that behind-the-scene folks (label people and concert organizers, even tour drivers) are much more interesting people to interview than band members, and they usually have a broader perspective. But zine folks like to focus on bands. Also, if they write about labels, zine folks often interview young and trendy labels or classic old ones. Who wants to hear old shit by an unhip label? Well, obviously you do.

MRR: What made you start the label back in 1990? Did it cross your mind back then that HeartFirst Records would survive for 25 years? Do you feel like you achieved your original goals?

I had been playing in a band, doing a zine, running a mailorder, and helping Destiny Records with distribution and Bonzen Records with some general label work. So it was a logical next step to start my own label. In 1990, the old West Berlin hardcore scene that I knew and loved was pretty much dead. Not because the wall fell but because all bands suddenly wanted to play like Guns N' Roses and make some money. I wasn't into that at all and started a vinyl label dedicated to the best vinyl format: the hardcore punk 7" EP. My first release had a flyer with a reprint of a Pushead column from *MRR* that exactly reflected my thoughts on hardcore punk 7" vinyl EPs. My original goal was to release music I liked by cool bands. So one day, this Japanese band, Nukey Pikes, sent a demo to Bonzen Records, and I knew they wouldn't do it, so I stepped up. I didn't want to ever release anything bigger than a 7", and I had no intentions of growing and becoming a more professional label, as opposed to many other German labels at the time who enjoyed moderate financial success. I remember trading my releases with Larry from Lookout! Records. That was a record label that got somewhere—I did not set out to do so. So I absolutely did not make special plans. And I guess I achieved my goals totally.

MRR: Were there any other hardcore/punk labels back then who were inspirations or role models for you? Why did you decided to only release 7"s?

My inspiration in general was the opportunity to be part of a subculture and step out of the role of a consumer and become a producer. Politically, labels like Crass Records, Bluurg, Corpus Christi, and Spiderleg influenced me. Musically, my label was inspired by the golden era of American and European hardcore punk, like early Dischord, Touch & Go, and SST. Those labels were best when they were small and put out 7"s. Later on, European bands carried the torch. Most bands were also best when they put out their debut 7"s. Records like the Deep Wound or Koro EPs (the US list goes on), Svart Framtid, and Bannlyst are pretty much musical perfection to me. I don't need more than eight minutes on a physical format. LPs are for rock, prog, and stoner metal. Today, one of the biggest jokes is that most vinyl buyers would rather buy a twelve-minute 12" than an eight-minute 7", and the 12" is at least twice as expensive to buy and costs much more to ship. The production price is only marginally different. 7"s are left out of the much heralded vinyl comeback, and the few remaining buyers of new vinyl are not very interested in 7"s. But that is cool, because 7"s are not for posers or folks who find it annoying to flip the record after four minutes.

Another huge influence on my label were folks in other countercultural fields like book publishing, such as Karin and Bernd Kramer who ran the long-standing anarchist Karin Kramer Verlag. They stayed true to their beliefs for decades and were awesome people. Unfortunately they passed away recently. There are many similarities between the world of small book publishers and small record labels, and I am familiar with both worlds.

MRR: The very first EP you released was by a newer Japanese band, Nukey Pikes. It was soon followed by more Japanese releases. I remember from reading older *MRR* issues that these bands were not as popular in Japan back then, and I'm not sure if they made a bigger impact outside Japan at all. Why did you choose to release these bands and not find some traditional Japanese HC bands?

Around 1990, there was this new scene starting up in Japan, mainly in the Tokyo, Chiba, Yokohama, and Saitama areas, which was more influenced by skateboarding and American HC than traditional Japanese HC. Back then, the Japanese scene was very different and more divided than today. Many of these bands originally appeared on releases (mostly compilations) on the great MCR Co. label, which is still going today (hello Yumikes!). Bands like Nukey Pikes, Urban Terror, Idora, Rose Rose, Sic, Mink Oil, plus many more. That scene

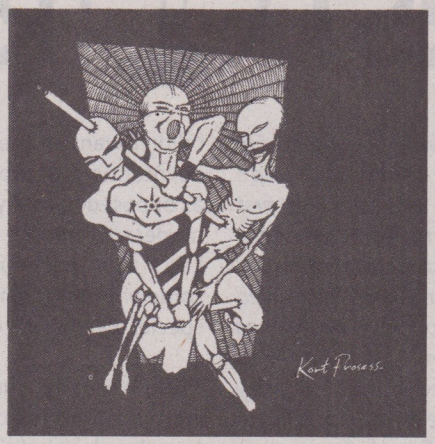
had few connections with the "traditional" bands you are referring to. Those old bands released on established labels like Selfish, which were more business people than DIY. The younger bands were very interested in international contacts. The established bands, not so much. Most of those bands are not popular today in the West with fans of Japanese hardcore, but they certainly were leaving their mark in Japan when they started playing.

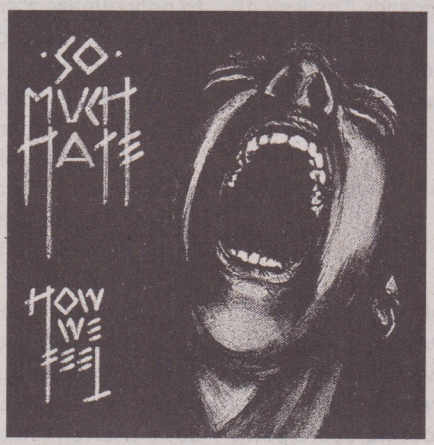
MRR: Did you travel to Japan to get into contact personally with Japanese bands and your friends? How was it to cooperate with Nori from LIFE on their new 7" 24 years after the release of the first Nukey Pikes record on HeartFirst?

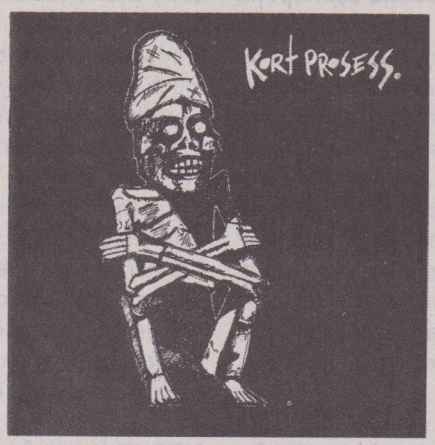
My first trip to Japan was in 1992, but because I was too poor I didn't go again until 2003. After that I went to Japan every year until the 2010s, so I've had a lot of personal connections in the Japanese scene for over two decades, which is great. I like to keep in touch with folks because my label is not just about music. For some band members, I saw their kids grow up. For other bands, I've been in touch with their parents. *[laughter]* It blows my mind that I released a record in 2014 with the same bass player who played on my very first release in 1990—Nori from LIFE, like you said. Their gig in Berlin was pretty much the best gig I saw in 2014, and many other folks said the same. It was almost cathartic—so much energy in the room!

MRR: A good number of early HeartFirst releases were not only by Japanese bands but also by bands from Canada. I would say that, similarly to the above-mentioned Japanese bands, these Canadian bands are almost forgotten today. Have they stood the test of time for you? How would you introduce their music to people who aren't familiar with them?

The Pacific Northwest had some great bands, and the scene in Vancouver, Seattle, and in-between was somewhat isolated from the rest of the West Coast. I got in touch with these bands through Eric from Fratricide who played in Strain later on. The Vancouver bands like Strain, Sparkmarker, and Brand New Unit had their own thing going. I am not in a popularity contest—those bands had their day, were good live, and cool guys. They shared members but all sounded different, more heavy and melodic, but still with a lot of power, so they fit on the label. If the internet doesn't like those bands anymore, then so be it.







MRR: I think that I can safely say that the country most associated with your label was Norway. What made you interested in Norwegian hardcore? What is unique about these bands? How would you compare Norwegian hardcore/punk to Finnish or Swedish, which are much more popular?

Even though Norwegian punks were known for travelling to Berlin starting in the early '80s, I first met some of them in person with the band So Much Hate on their first European tour in 1987. They were some of the coolest people ever. On their second tour they brought Life...But How to Live It? along with them. Not only were those really good bands musically, especially on stage, but they were smart people, politically active, and classy drinkers. Almost all people from that generation of Norwegian punk were like that.

I think that Oslo in the '80s and early '90s had the best punk scene I have ever seen. Lots of people, young and old, many women, very politically active (Blitz squat, etc.). And even though I love many old Swedish and Finnish bands, their scenes were simply not that great. You have to remember that scenes are not just about music to me but the whole package. I think that most Norwegian bands had more of an edge to them musically. Norwegian hardcore punk guitar playing is totally distinct. I know of no one in the US or elsewhere in Scandinavia who plays like that. Swedish bands were either melodic like Asta Kask, Ebba Grön, etc., or known for perfecting the Discharge style. You can only do so much with that. Also in the '90s, I felt that most Swedish bands were more like metal bands, even if they played a punk style. That always alienated me in a way, but I also know that this metal and rock aspect is exactly what makes them appealing to the rest of the world, especially fans in the USA.

MRR: Tell us more about the Norwegian Leather label you are involved in. What's been released so far and why should people listen to these records? Are there any more reissues planned?

As opposed to Heartfirst, Norwegian Leather does release LPs. The idea was to reissue classic Norwegian stuff before the bootleggers got to it. This has not worked in every case, unfortunately. I absolutely loathe bootlegs and bootleggers. The Bannlyst – *Diskografi* LP took forever since I ran into heavy mastering problems along the way. People should listen to these bands because Bannlyst was one of the best bands of their era, and their best songs are not on the 7". They were best when they recorded on two tracks in their rehearsal room in Molde. The first So Much Hate LP marks the end of the early era of X-Port Plater releases and is their best release. I saw that band so many times live; they must be the best live band I ever saw in my life, second only to Gauze. They toured extensively all over Europe in the late '80s.

Not sure what I will do next on the label. Luckily, the great Cradle to Grave label has also reissued the Siste Dagers Helvete and Barn Av Regnbuen LPs, so the essential music has been rereleased. The big mission is to reissue Life...But How to Live It? on vinyl, and it will be done in the UK. The progress seems almost as slow as it was with my Bannlyst LP.

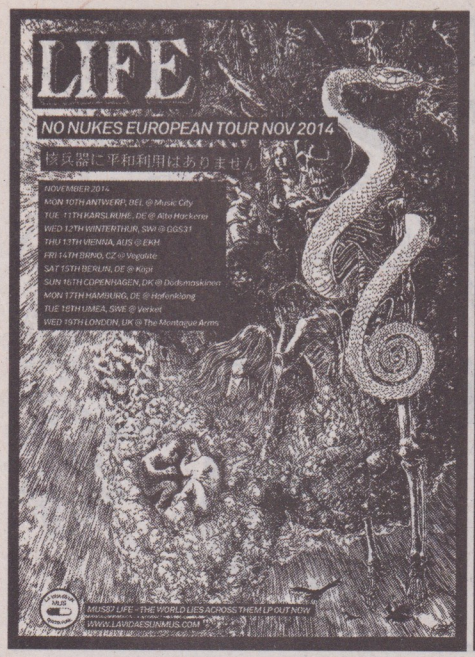
MRR: If I am right, back in the '90s there were no German bands released on your label, apart from the 1986 Dunkle Tage 7" reissue. Why? Were there no interesting bands in Germany back then? This changed around the mid-'90s when you put out Solid Decline and a couple others (Bombenalarm, Doomtown, etc.), which looked like a new wave of good German HC. Is that how you felt?

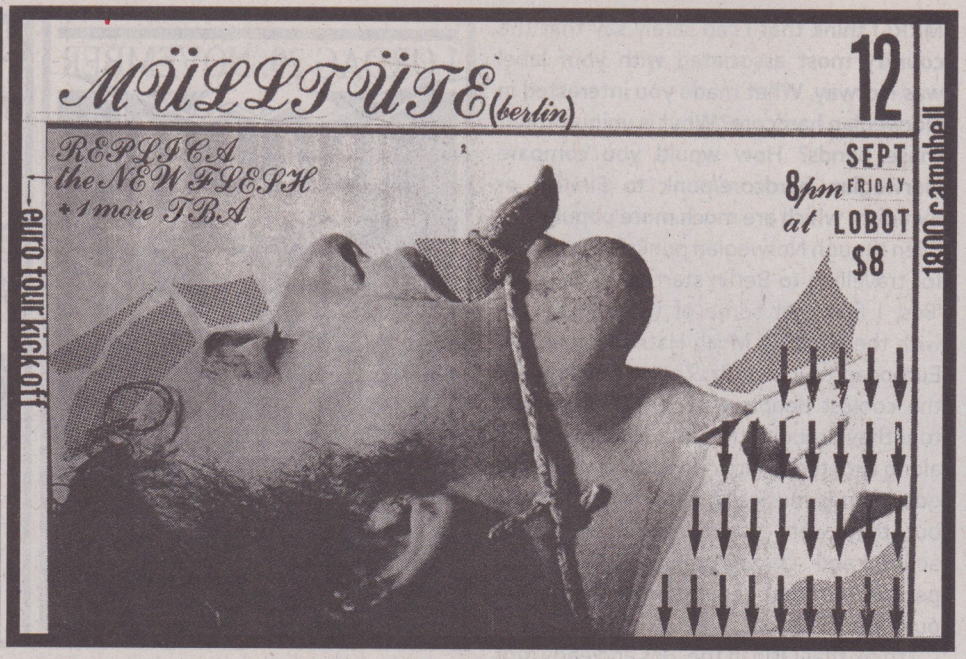
You are right, I had German bands on compilations on Heartfirst, but the reissue of Dunkle Tage was the first full release. Dunkle Tage were one of the few peace punk influenced bands from Germany, along with Enola Gay and Tin Can Army.

The reason why I did not release many German bands originally was that in the early '90s, Germany had many record labels and not many great bands. Also, I do not go band shopping, I like things to grow kinda organically and have the bands ask me. I knew many members of bands over the decades, and the bands just decided to be on other labels (most of which sucked). You are right that in the mid '00s many great new bands were starting in Germany, often sharing members. That's why I put some of the best of those on the *Deutschland in Decline* compilation EP. These bands were really solid and great live. My favorite of those was probably Doomtown, and it's a shame that they split up with some of their best songs never recorded.

MRR: I would say that today many German bands play kind of boring emo/crust or some tough guy HC crap, but of course you can always find some killer German bands. Which bands from your country would you recommend?

After the heyday of Deutschpunk in the '80s, many German bands got pretty boring. Most German bands are usually influenced by trendy US bands and play the style for years after it has gone totally out of style in every other place in the world. This is not very exciting, but some bands get pretty popular that way. There will be bands in Germany that play a watered-down version of Tragedy for decades! Or a tenth rate copy of Youth of Today, not to mention the legions of shitty tough guy bands, but those have nothing to do with punk (or even hardcore) to me. For recent bands, I would recommend all the Berlin bands that are on the *Berlin Tristesse* compilation (those that still exist): Mülltute, Pig// Control, Peacebastard, Nuclearcult, Earth Crust Displacement,





and Crack Under Pressure. But there are other bands in Berlin (and Potsdam, which is close by) that are really worth checking out: Derbe Lebowski, Hatehug, P.I.S.S., Levitations, Howling Wolves, Life Fucker, Reactory, Crowskin, Cancer Clan, Cult Values, Disnea Boys, and Feast. Other German bands I like that are not from Berlin and Potsdam would be Nightslug, Midnight Crisis, Bronco Libre, High, Hysterese, Svffer, Leidkultur, and Honeymoon.

MRR: You submitted almost six pages about the West Berlin hardcore scene between 1983 and 1989 for the booklet of the *Berlin Punk Rock* double LP compilation on Weird System, so there are of course many things to ask you about Berlin hardcore back in the '80s. What was the very first hardcore gig you saw?

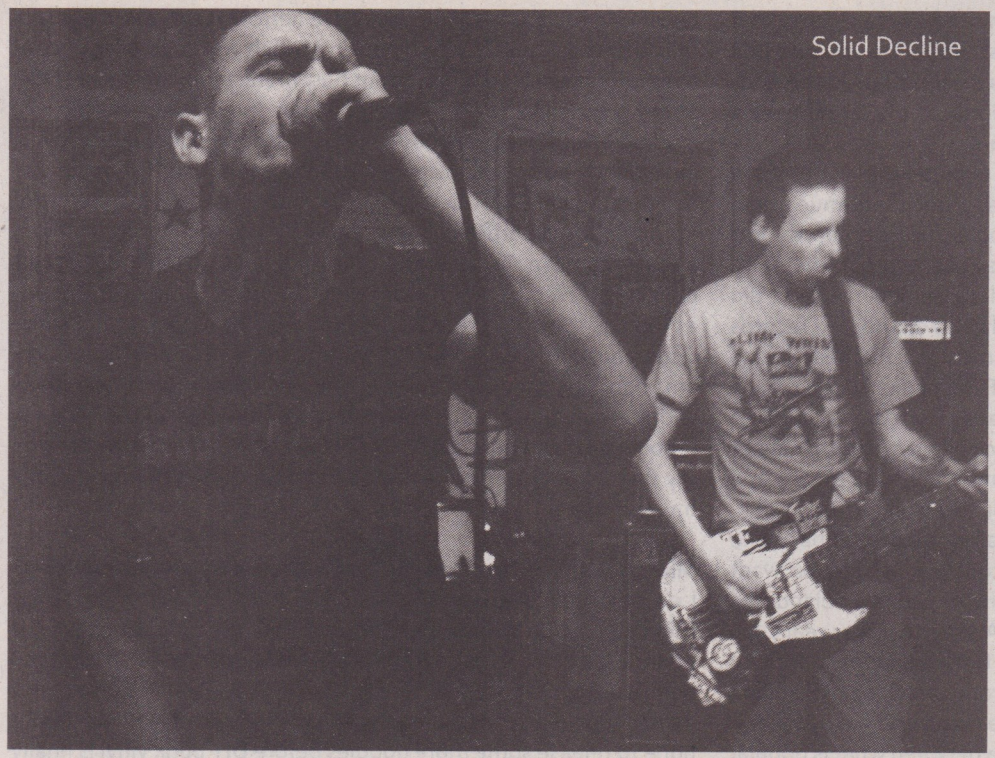
I would say that outside of Germany many of the great Berlin hardcore bands are pretty unknown. Could you tell more about them and about their releases? Which you would recommend?

My first real gig in Berlin was Bad Brains and Toxoplasma at the Loft in 1983. Before that I saw Marplots play a party at my school, because I went to the same school as their bass player Knutsen. Berlin had many great bands with releases during that era, mostly on Destiny Records, Zoro, and Pogar/Vinyl Boogie: Abratzk, Beton Combo, Combat Not Conform, Disaster Area, DTJ, Jingo de Lunch, Manson Youth, No Allegiance, the Rest, Resurrection of Meat, Sick Pleasure, Squandered Message (before I joined them and ruined the band), Stromsperre, Vellocet, Vorkriegsjugend, Zerstörte Jugend. I recommend all their releases. (I feel like I am writing a *MRR* scene report in 1985/86!) It's great that most of these bands don't get hyped on the internet today. Fuck the internet punk "experts"!

Most gigs in Berlin at the time were full of drunkards, and there was a lot of self-destruction and sometimes a fair bit of violence, which is not all bad. Things got better when more positive and political bands got popular. When the whole bandana and flannel instead of leather and spikes thing happened. I remember that once I spoke to my man Schlumpf and said that there could never be clichéd straightedge folks in Berlin. The whole concept just seemed too stupid and strange to Berlin punks. I knew some punks in Berlin in the mid '80s who didn't drink, but they would not label themselves as straightedge. Seeing punks with Minor Threat on their leather jackets getting totally fucked up was a common sight in those days. But I guess my theory about straightedge was wrong.

MRR: What was the relationship between the radical left-wing politicalsceneand hardcore/punk scene in Berlin like back then? Did you attend the May Day riots and other bigger demonstrations? Would you attend them now? How important was the big squatters' movement in West Berlin for the hardcore/punk scene?

The relationship was solid since the punks used the creative and political spaces society left to them (or that were fought for and taken). Squatting was huge in Berlin. In general, in any scene you will always find some very politically active people (a minority) and others who just want to fuck shit up. The majority lie somewhere in between. Towards the late '80s, many political activists turned away from punk and listened to other music, like



Solid Decline

hip-hop or techno. I attended May Day demonstrations since they were a part of the trade union's demonstration in the '80s. Over the years the riots got pretty generic and boring. I also went to the big anti-Reagan demonstration when they sealed off Kreuzberg and shut down the subway. Of course there are still many reasons to have revolutionary demonstrations on May 1st. I went again in 2015 and had mixed feelings. In Kreuzberg, they pacified the situation by starting a commercial cultural and musical event called Myfest some years ago. The result is that now there is no more drunk rioting by folks from outside of Berlin. It turned into a stupid mindless consumer and tourist event that left a trail of destruction and smashed beer bottles that matched the destruction of looting and smashing windows of years gone past. 2015 was especially bad, and things will have to change, but I heard that they will give even more funding to the stupid Myfest event in 2016. To stop the riots, the city council and cops have created a new, less revolutionary, and rather capitalist monster.

So Much Hate

MRR: When did you find out about punk in East Berlin/DDR? Did you have any contacts to punx from DDR? What was it like playing in East Berlin with Squandered Message back in Communist times? How did you manage to organize the gig there?

I did not have many connections to DDR punks. Our plan usually was to cross DDR as fast as possible on our way out of West Berlin and to West Germany to play gigs there. The only band I knew were L'Aattentat, because I had their LP which was released in the West in 1986. Unfortunately their guitarist, Imad, turned out to be a Stasi informer. I must admit I was pretty ignorant and the concept of punks in the Eastern Bloc is very interesting, and I have nothing but respect for those who made things happen in those countries back then, like the super active Polish punk scene. Some Berlin bands like the Rest and Disaster Area and international bands like Nomeansno went across the wall to East Berlin to play. I am not sure about the year, but in '87 or '88 Squandered Message played a gig in East Berlin at Erlösakirche, We just got approached by the organizers by letter. One would have to travel across the border as a tourist, dress nicely, and of course could bring no instruments. I remember the concert being pretty strange; our style was a little too much for parts of the crowd, so many left. Also the support band seemed strange, their drummer wore a Böhse Onkelz shirt. This was a total no-no in the West at the time. They were playing mainly because they had a backline and a PA, which was a very rare thing in East Berlin. The punk scene in East Berlin was pretty divided, and there were different groups who did not like each other. It was not easy to be a punk in the DDR and there seemed to be substantial infighting between the punk fractions.

MRR: How do you see the changes in Berlin from the '80s or early '90s compared to today? Both as a city and in the hardcore/punk scene.

The city has been sold out to rich folks, largely gentrified (especially the Eastern center of the city, but not just there), and poor Berliners are being more and more marginalized and have to move out. Old Berlin is dead, which is OK under certain aspects. Most of the much-applauded (by the *New York Times* etc.) great atmosphere in the city is a re-enactment of Berlin lifestyle for and by the foreigners and tourists. Band-wise, Berlin has more good bands than ever before, it seems, but is also more segmented than ever before into different micro scenes. See my list above.

MRR: You never released anything by bands from Eastern

Europe, and I also don't think I ever saw any Eastern European records in your distro (but I could be mistaken!). Do you find any Eastern European hardcore/punk bands interesting? In the end, Poland and the Czech Republic are neighbors of Germany and we're closer to you than Canada or Japan...

My focus, when it comes to releases, definitely is not Eastern Europe. This is just because I did not hang out there much, and as a born West Berliner, I traditionally looked West or North. But I know and like tons of Polish bands. I saw Dezerter on their first tour in the West in Berlin, before the wall came down. After it did we had lots of Polish bands in Berlin, and I also distributed records by bands like Homomilitia and Post Regiment. I remember seeing AMD, from Hungary, and I carried their LP in the distro. The reason why I am careful about more unknown bands from those countries (especially today, when it is really hard to sell anything that is not an internet hype) is that their releases often are hard to sell, and those releases were very available in Berlin from all distros.

Nowadays, Robert Refuse does a great job and goes back and forth between Poland and Berlin, but today, most people want legendary old bands from Poland, not the new ones. Poland had tons of great dark and wave-ish bands. A style that was really hip until recently in the US. I don't know why those bands are not more popular nowadays. If those bands were from Barcelona or Sweden, people in the US and elsewhere would be going crazy about them. As I said before, it often is a big difference between what is popular locally or inside a country and what people will buy internationally. Today I think everything is pretty much unsellable internationally, unless the band tours a lot and is great live, or if it is one of those internet message board hypes, or a distinct style that happens to be the trend of the month. The bad news for bands and labels these days is most fans (those very few who will buy vinyl instead of just downloading) will not buy your band's release but rather the bands that you are influenced by from the '80s. Punk is a retro style, after all.

MRR: I am sure that back in the '80s *Maximum Rocknroll* was a quite important source of international news and contacts for you. Do you still read it? It's probably no big deal at all, and everybody can listen and like whatever the fuck they want, but in the longest running international DIY hardcore/punk zine I would expect better and broader taste...I am curious to hear your opinion. What do you think about their 2014 poll of best hardcore/punk records? To be honest, I find the majority of records super-enthusiastically promoted by 90% of people asked in *MRR* to be really bad. What do you think?

I have been buying pretty much every issue of *MRR* since I picked up my first one in San Francisco. That was number 27. I also wrote Berlin scene reports in the late 1980s. The zine does a great job to this day I think, but even though I still try to pick it up and want to support it, I don't read it as much as I used to. You are right that some of their workers and writers have a strange (in the bad meaning of the word) and rather uniform taste. *MRR* is creating some trendy bands as part of the hype machine, but they are also victims of hype and a lot of the shitworkers are pretty clueless musically. Folks today are overwhelmed by all the music out there on the web. At the *MRR* compound all this great music is available on vinyl in the archive. Still folks have narrow tastes as always and follow certain style leaders. I often scratch my head when I read about the latest trends and about how predictable the fans can be. Shitty trends like the new gothic bands (now called deathrock), mediocre hardcore played by youths dressed as skinheads, horrible indie bands being sold as punk. After 30 years, this fake band shit happens again. But this time *MRR* supports it—weird. Some of the musical and other columns in *MRR* make me cringe. But this has always been the case with them and folks are entitled to their own taste, even if it is just following the latest internet hype. But as long as some veterans like Martin, Ken, or Al Quint, and some great younger folks like Matt still write for them, not all is lost. It's amazing how they manage to come out every month, especially with the constant changeover of zine coordinators. Actually I think I should be their coordinator. I would fire at least half of the staff on my first day there. It might hurt operations but certainly improve musical content.

MRR: Are there plans to keep HeartFirst alive for another 25 years?

I do not actively approach bands like most hip labels do. If my friends come up with something that they want me to release, it might happen. If Ruidosa Inmundicia manage to book studio time before 2020, that would be great. Also Pig//Control, if they are not slowed down by reproduction/parent mode. But who knows? I hope to release some more goodies before DIY punk vinyl is finally dead. We sure are headed in that direction, and it surely will not survive for another 25 years. Thank you very much for the interview with interesting questions! If you run your fanzine for another 25, I will consider doing the same with the label, maybe.

You can find out more about HeartFirst at heartfirst.net. Rest in power, Filip Fuchs.

Flo (right) and friend Heio (left)

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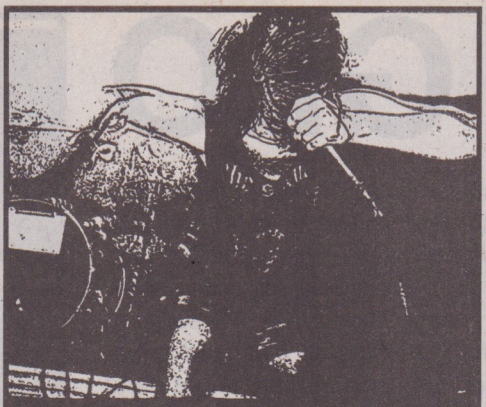

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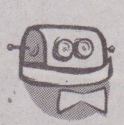

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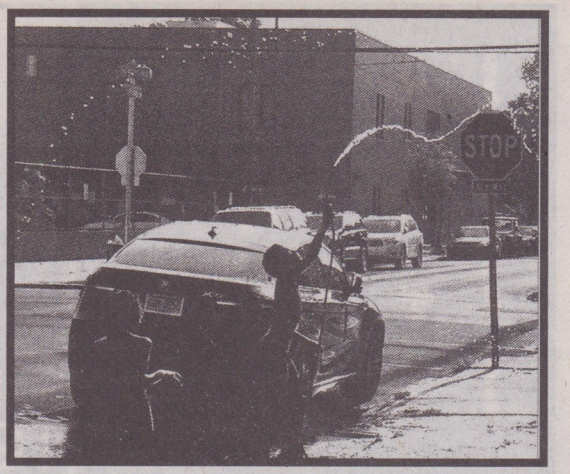
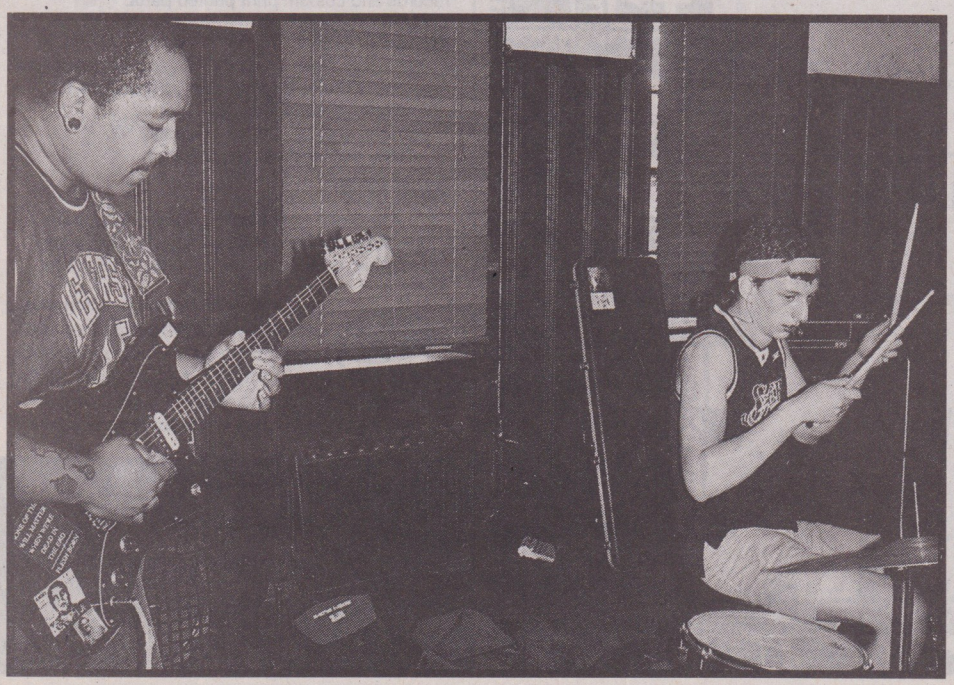


We sat down with Philly hardcore upstarts Soul Glo right before they opened for G.L.O.S.S. with HIRS at LAVA Space. The band, made up of Pierce (vocals), Ethan (bass), Dustin (drums), and Ruben (guitar), have been playing together for a year and a half. We talked about the show that night—while Pierce said, "I have an underlying feeling of dread and anxiety" about opening for G.L.O.S.S., he certainly didn't let it get to him and both Soul Glo and HIRS were incredible—and about being a band half made up of people of color in the hardcore scene. The Soul Glo LP will be coming out soon on SRA Records.

Interview and introduction by Yoni Kroll. Photos by Joe Evans.

MRR: Let's start talking about this show. You were all just talking a second ago about feeling scared. Why?
Ruben: It's not every day you get to play a show where it's not just for really angry white dudes from the suburbs. It's really nice to just hear other voices. It's going to be a different crowd, and there's a lot of respect for both bands and a lot of admiration. It's really cool to be on it. I'm really just hoping it holds up to us being asked to play.
Dustin: I'm pretty nervous. I feel really privileged to get to be a part of it.

MRR: I really appreciate the no-nonsense approach to keeping this show safe. Were any of you at the Limp Wrist show? There were a ton of bros there wilin' out super hard. The whole thing was just really awkward and uncomfortable, especially for the queer folks who don't come to shows very often but were there specifically to see a queer punk band who were disappointed and had to duck elbows.You were saying before that the show tonight is not normally the audience you play for. Is that just the nature of hardcore?
Ruben: It really just depends on who the band playing is. I've been to a Living Color show where representation was definitely much different. Granted, it was a lot of older people, but it was still a little bit more diverse than going to see the Cro-Mags. And I like the Cro-Mags, but every time I go to the show it's like, "Yeahhhhh."



MRR: Lyrically, you have a lot more to say than your average hardcore band. How does your band go about getting a point across?
Pierce: Probably based on our appearances. People are going to listen to us more because they perceive us as the new voice of hardcore because finally all the white people have run out of ideas and there are no more things for them to sing about. That's really honestly how I see it. I feel like it's time now for actual anger and actual content to come to the front and all that other bullshit can step the fuck back. I feel like people are recognizing that, even if there are definitely a fair share of people in the scene tokenizing me. Punk is always about how you look, so we're on the cutting edge of that. Being the first person to support someone else voicing their struggle means you're going to look so much more punk! I'm sorry, is that too cynical? *[everybody laughs]*

MRR: How is this band different, in terms of how you're perceived, versus other bands you've been in?
Pierce: I've never talked directly about the stuff I talk about in this band. I have [addressed it] before, but I feel like it's always been hidden much more deeply in metaphor. I feel like that causes people to avoid really trying to work hard on understanding what the songs were about.

The first song that I ever wrote for any band ever was actually about people not expecting me to like the things I like because of the way that I look. I've talked about this stuff before, but now I'm saying "I" and talking directly about the specific types of people that I have problems with. I'm talking about what's really happening, because nobody else is going to get it otherwise.

Nobody is really ready for true metaphor or Black art yet, to be perfectly honest. It's happened before in other forms of media, and it's always been seen as a fad. And the thing is that if you talk about anything concerning an experience of marginalization, you have to be direct about it. You can't go into the realm of it being art because it has to be direct, or otherwise no one's going to fucking talk to you about it because your narrative is not the common narrative. It's not what people are used to hearing unless it's been shouted at you or written in an essay.

MRR: Was Soul Glo put together specifically to be a political band?
Dustin: No, me and Ruben had been hanging out a bit, and he wanted to jam with people. I was friends with Ethan, so we hit him up, and Ruben was friends with Pierce, so he hit him up. Eventually, Pierce was kinda, like, "I want to write my lyrics about this." It just happened that way. There was never a plan.
Pierce: When I realized that everyone wanted it to be very heavy, I was like, "Well, I'm not going to write about bullshit. I'm not going to write songs that are truly about anger and truly about real pain and have them be about anything besides actual things that have happened to me."

A really good friend of mine said to me once that you shouldn't scream in music or art in any way unless you have something to be screaming about, unless you can't express that thought or that feeling without fucking screaming. I have yet to hear something more true than that, especially when it comes to hardcore.

MRR: You just got back from tour not too long ago.
Pierce: It was the greatest day of my life. I went to bed! *[everybody laughs]*

MRR: How was the actual tour? What direction did you go in?
Ethan: Tour was phenomenal.
Ruben: We went north and straight south over to Texas and then cut back.
Dustin: Besides the car troubles and stuff, it couldn't have gone better. We got treated really well.

MRR: Was it mostly hardcore shows?
Ruben: Punk and hardcore.
Dustin: We did play this one slam poetry session in Denton, Texas. It was definitely a more diverse crowd of performers than many of the shows that we played.
Ruben: It was, like, eight to twelve performers and then one keyboard act and then we played. It was actually a really beautiful thing. There was really great flow, and there were a lot of supportive people there.
Ethan: There were so many people in the room while the poetry was happening that you couldn't stand in there at some point. I thought it was really cool that people came out for that.

MRR: So SRA Records—home to HIRS, Flag of Democracy, Psychic Teens, and Trophy Wife—just announced they're putting out your full-length. How'd that come about? BJ from SRA just heard your demo and that was that?
Pierce: He was like, "It was good, I'm doing a record for you." And I'm like, "Okay!"
Dustin: We're really stoked. We never really expected that.
Pierce: I've never done a record before. I'd never even done a tape before this band. I've never been to most of the places that we play at.

MRR: What are the future touring plans?
Ruben: A couple more weekends here and there. By summer, if all goes accordingly, we might go on a tour of the whole US.
Pierce: If we overcome the obstacles...
Ethan: An obstacle has never stopped us before!
Dustin: It damn near, when we got stranded in New Hampshire. That almost stopped us.
Ethan: That's my favorite story from tour. It was fucking terrifying.
MRR: What happened?
Ruben: Our van broke down in New Hampshire, and we stayed with the owner of the venue, and she warned us that her landlord did not like loud noise.
Dustin: Does not like speaking!
Ethan: Any kind of noise. She said, "Frank likes playing guitar and hearing his guitar, and that's about it. And that's just the way it goes."
Ruben: We walked up, and there's someone playing John Mayer riffs, and we're like, "Frank!"
Ethan: We approached the house, and there's four no trespassing signs on the front fence and I'm like, "This can't be that good." We had to go inside, and we couldn't talk above a whisper the entire night because we were afraid Frank was going come from next door and kill us all.
Dustin: So we woke up at seven in the morning to walk 45 minutes to the garage across fucking New Hampshire, or wherever the hell we were, only for the garage to be like, "Yo, we can't help you."
Ruben: Then the van magically started and so we drove back to Philly! We canceled a tour date, took a day off, and went back at it.
Pierce: We kind of stupidly decided to just say, "Okay, let's just go, let's finish it out. We don't want to quit." The car did the same thing, not turning on, two or three other times. But it never kept us from getting to a show.

MRR: How do you go about putting together new songs? What's the process for that?
Pierce: Smoke a lot of weed.
Rubin: Yeah, that.
Dustin: More often than not, Ruben has riffs and stuff, and we jam on it.

MRR: I feel like your influences are coming from a lot of different directions. Also, because your ages are kind of all over the map.
Ethan: I'm 20.
Ruben: I'll be 30 in 4 months.
Pierce: I'm 23.
Dustin: I'm 20, too.

MRR: Ruben, you and I have talked about music a bunch, and I remember saying something about a Soul Glo riff sounding like Universal Order of Armageddon, but I'm pretty sure you're the only person in this band who listens to UOA.
Ruben: I just have a bunch of influences from growing up, and I'll play one thing, and they'll think it sounds like something else, and that's kind of why it meets in the middle. In my head, I'll be like, "This reminds me of Ebullition." And they'll be like, "It's a grind song." And I'm all, "No...yeah, it's a grind part now."

MRR: In the '90s it wasn't, but ...
Ruben: ...it definitely is now.
Ethan: I think my favorite part about this band is that I like really bad music.
Ruben: I didn't think that was going to come up!
Ethan: What, my bad music? I'll tell you who I was listening to on the way over was A Day to Remember.
Ruben: Woof!
Pierce: I didn't know it was that bad.
Ruben: Neither did I! What?!

MRR: I don't even know what that is.
Ruben: Don't worry about it, for your own sake. The things we've agreed upon in the car have been a couple random screamo bands, a couple random emo bands, and then we'll have a System of a Down session. We can agree on that.

MRR: Ruben, you've been booking a lot of shows over the past few years. How has the environment for that changed, if at all?
Ruben: Me and Pierce both do some booking.
Pierce: But you do way more booking! You do ten shows for every one that I do.
Ruben: I've been in Philly for almost eleven years, and I didn't book for the first couple years. Then I was in a band that couldn't get any shows and neither could my friends so we had some shows and then some touring bands hit me up and at one point I was doing over 100 shows a year. Now I'm down to 60 or 70; that's like me taking a break. It's been fun. I've done over 500 shows since being in the city. It's been a lot of fun.

MRR: Do you feel like Soul Glo could have existed in Philly six or seven years ago? Or is it a different environment for hardcore these days?
Pierce: I think we could have, but we would have gotten a lot more shit.
Ruben: It could have existed. There have always been political bands in Philly. It probably wouldn't have been the same, but you don't know what would happen. We're having fun while we're here, and if you gotta say some things, you gotta say some things.

Listen at soulglophl.bandcamp.com.

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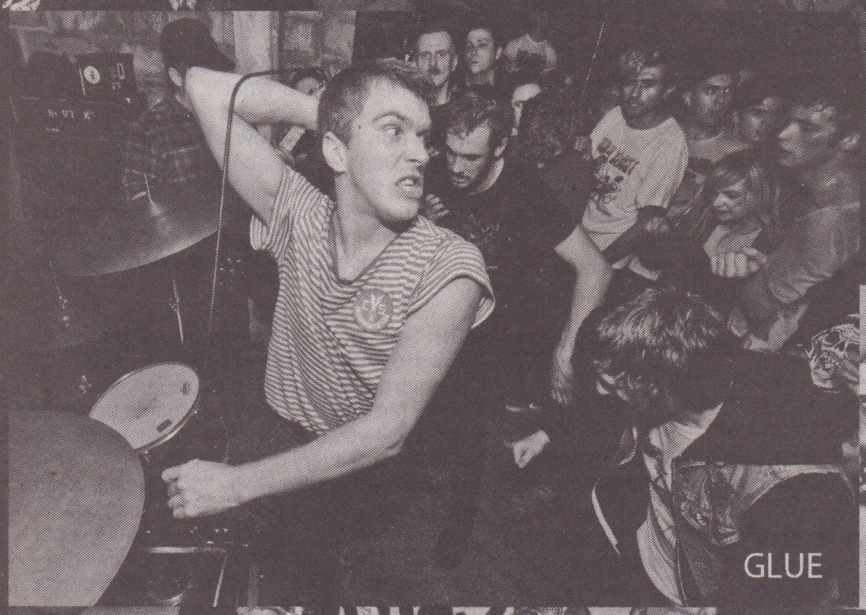

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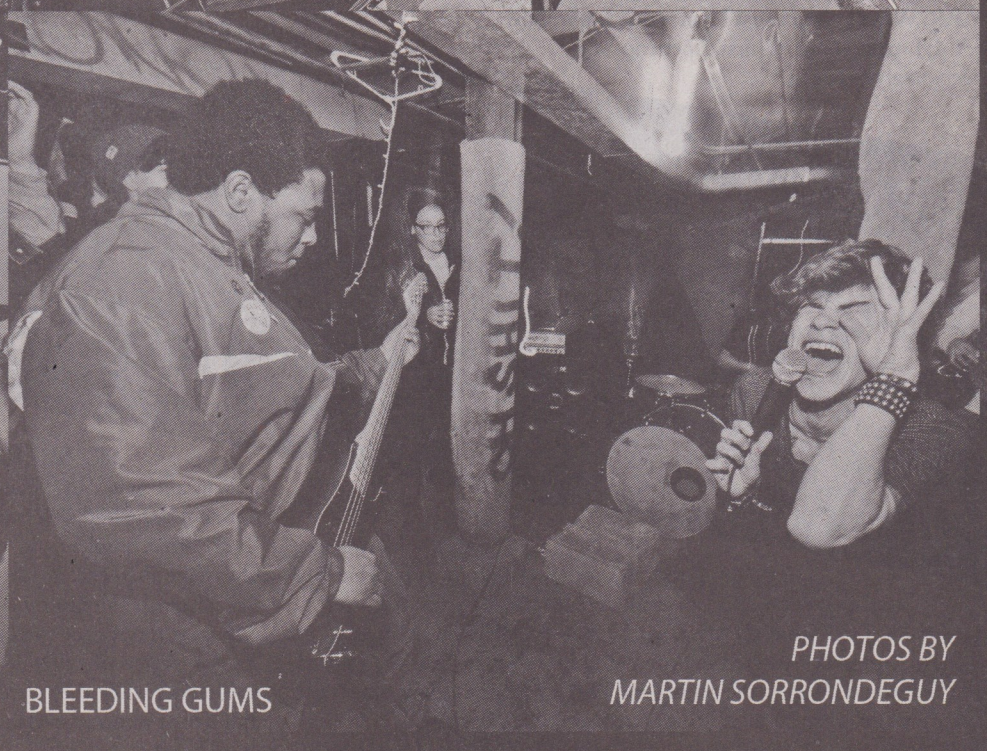


BLEEDING GUMS

PHOTOS BY
MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

the COLTRANES

Introduction and Interview by Kevin Rhea. Photos provided by the band.

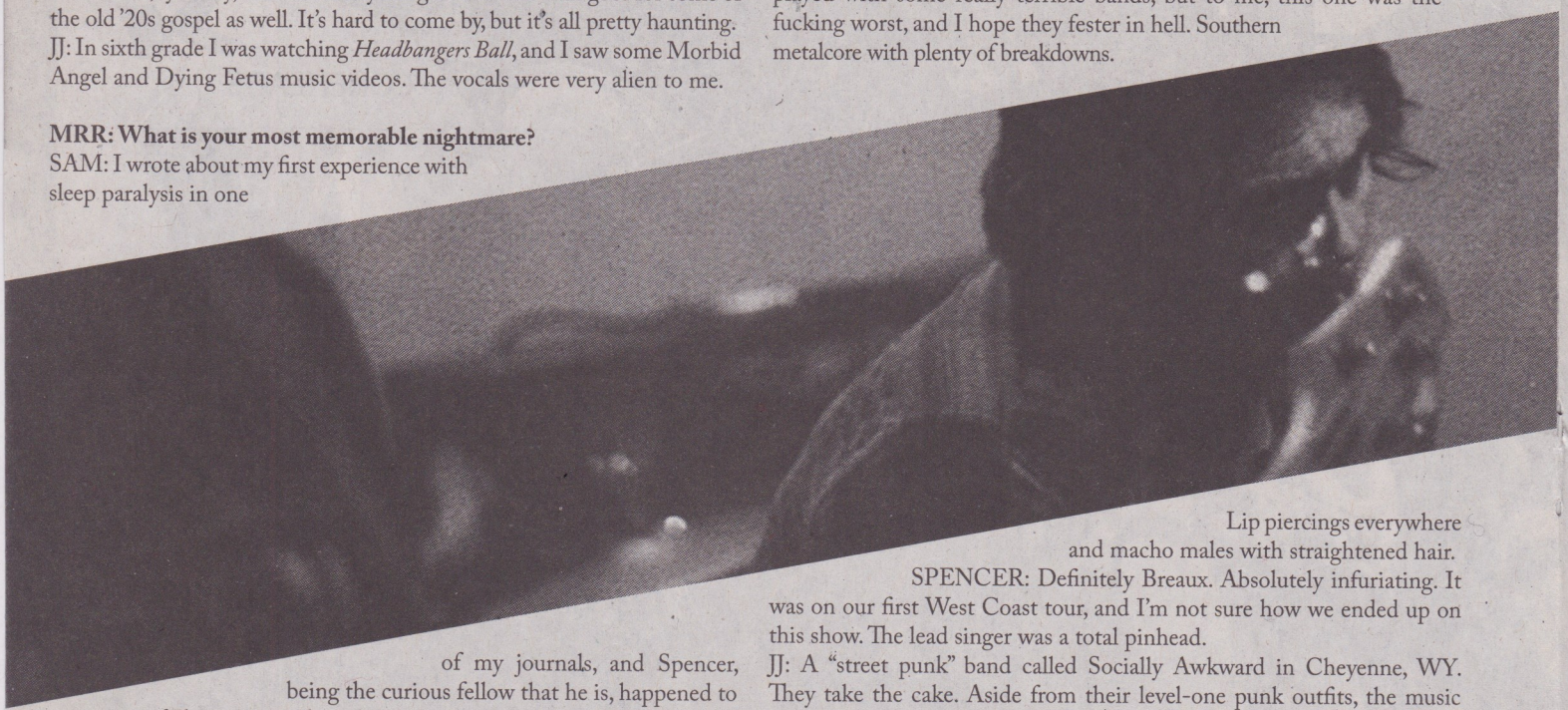
In the esoteric quest for all that is heavy in rock'n'roll, the Coltranes have come as near to holding the grail as anyone I know in recent times. With elemental, fingernail scraping, knuckle dragging, minimally subdued angst, they grind up pieces of sound as completely as the B-side of My War, *but with the timeless finesse of classic Cooper. Impossible? Check the Akashic record or Google it and find out what the soundtrack to a 1974/84 drug nightmare on 45 sounds like on 33 or 78.*

The Coltranes are:
Sam—Bass, JJ—Guitar, Spencer—Vocals, Evan—Drums

MRR: What is the first music you ever heard which confused or frightened you?
SAM: Even in the more sheltered days of my youth, I was hardly confused or frightened, and usually excited, over unfamiliar music. However, my first encounter with Kettle Cadaver's *Taste of Blood* left me distraught and worried about human sanity.
EVAN: Krzysztof Penderecki made me feel uncomfortable. I remember Spencer playing it for me as a child, and I would imagine myself dying and being in the ground and entire civilizations would be built on top of me and destroyed as time went on. It was actually really traumatic for me. I must have been eight years old.
SPENCER: The first music that truly unsettled me was probably the early delta blues players or some of that old hillbilly stuff. I listened to all that stuff really early on, and it's always stuck with me. Leadbelly, Skip James, Blind Lemon Jefferson, Charley Patton, etc. There's more sincerity with that music, lyrically, than most anything else to me. That goes for some of the old '20s gospel as well. It's hard to come by, but it's all pretty haunting.
JJ: In sixth grade I was watching *Headbangers Ball*, and I saw some Morbid Angel and Dying Fetus music videos. The vocals were very alien to me.

MRR: What is your most memorable nightmare?
SAM: I wrote about my first experience with sleep paralysis in one of my journals, and Spencer, being the curious fellow that he is, happened to read that entry, and we decided to use it as a part of the insert of our LP, *I've Got Heaven In My Smile*. I refuse to retell the nightmare.
EVAN: A presence entered my room and lifted my bed off the ground. The bed would fly up to the ceiling and back to the ground over and over. That was terrifying, because I must have been five years old.
SPENCER: I remember having a lot of nightmares as a kid, but at a certain age I just stopped having dreams all together. Every once in a blue moon I'll remember little vignettes that occurred throughout the night, but it's very rare. The last vivid dream that sort of disturbed me was one of me petting my dog on the sofa and noticing that her bottom half was laying down behind a wall in front of me. I went over to the wall to check it out, but I couldn't find her top half. I looked back and her top half was peering out at me from behind the couch. It was like there was a second version of my dog that was playing some fucked up trick on me. And then as that sequence ended, it transitioned into me standing on the street that I grew up on, and it was totally vacant. Then entered three penny-farthings that were riding themselves around in circles.

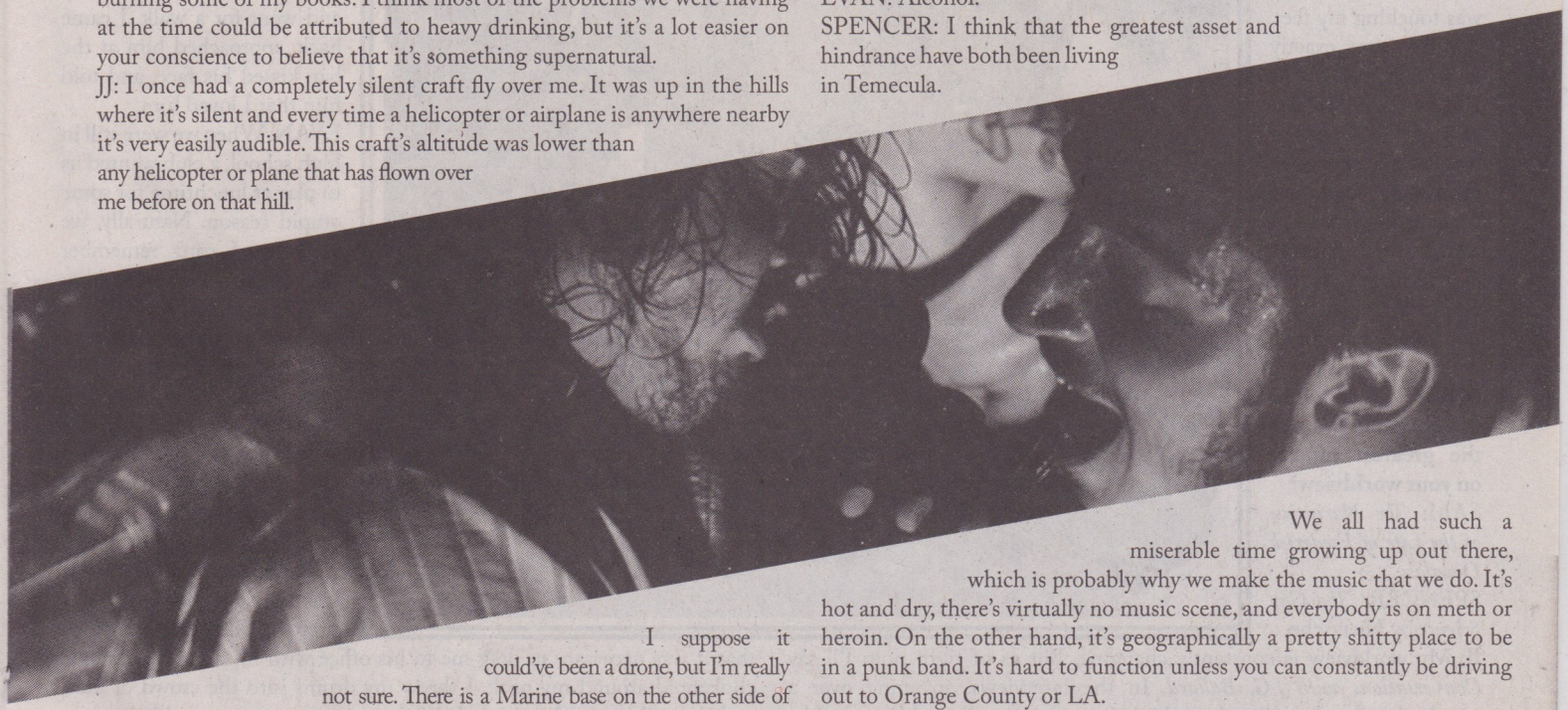
MRR: Who is the worst band you've ever seen? Why do they get the honor?
SAM: Pure Shit at The Smell, and it was pure shit at the smell. I'd love to see another performance.
EVAN: Fucking some band called Breaux from Salt Lake City. We have played with some really terrible bands, but to me, this one was the fucking worst, and I hope they fester in hell. Southern metalcore with plenty of breakdowns.



Lip piercings everywhere and macho males with straightened hair.
SPENCER: Definitely Breaux. Absolutely infuriating. It was on our first West Coast tour, and I'm not sure how we ended up on this show. The lead singer was a total pinhead.
JJ: A "street punk" band called Socially Awkward in Cheyenne, WY. They take the cake. Aside from their level-one punk outfits, the music was abysmal. The drummer couldn't keep the beat at all. The singer kept yelling at the rest of the band for messing up, and before the set, for a lengthy period of time, he was cursing at his mom for being there and not leaving while they were going to play. Questioning her as to why she didn't trust him and exclaiming that he had a reputation to uphold.

"I'VE HAD COUNTLESS DREAMS OF DEATH AND DECAY; OF ABDUCTION AND MIND CONTROL. BUT THE SUM OF THESE DOES NOT AMOUNT TO THE UFO ENCOUNTER..."

MRR: Have you ever had an experience with unexplainable phenomena?
SAM: I've had countless dreams of death and decay; of abduction and mind control. But the sum of these does not amount to the UFO encounter that I had with a past girlfriend. We ran towards the aircraft as she cried tears of pure joy.
EVAN: The only thing I can think of is when my Grandma died, every light in the house started to surge. It was pretty cool. But my Dad has some good stories about moving into a house in Bisbee, Arizona, and having secret tunnels in his closets and an African death ritual mask spontaneously combusting and burning down the entire house. He has other stories also that he just will not tell me. I'm not entirely sure why.
SPENCER: Some unusual stuff used to happen at my old house. Like doors unlocking themselves and things going missing. Over time, everybody living at that house started to totally lose their fucking minds, and at a certain point my dad started blaming inanimate objects and tried burning some of my books. I think most of the problems we were having at the time could be attributed to heavy drinking, but it's a lot easier on your conscience to believe that it's something supernatural.
JJ: I once had a completely silent craft fly over me. It was up in the hills where it's silent and every time a helicopter or airplane is anywhere nearby it's very easily audible. This craft's altitude was lower than any helicopter or plane that has flown over me before on that hill.



I suppose it could've been a drone, but I'm really not sure. There is a Marine base on the other side of those mountains, so it could have something to do with that, I suppose.

MRR: Is sex a conscious inspiration on your music?
SAM: Yes.
EVAN: I believe so, yes.

MRR: Is violence?
SAM: Yes.
EVAN: Sometimes, yes.

MRR: Is it primarily music to fuck to, or music to fight to?
SAM: Yes. Nearly every fuck is a fight.
EVAN: I think a little bit of both. Humans are dirty, disgusting animals. But there are so many levels to this question, and keep in mind, I don't write the lyrics or the music.
SPENCER: Yeah, I'm very conscious of both sex and violence while writing. I would say that it's primarily music to fuck to, but I probably say that because I don't get laid very often. Our music is sort of voyeuristic in the sense that I don't think I'd have the guts to actually perform half the acts that I write about, but it's somewhat satisfying to observe. And I guess that repression makes you sort of angry after a while.
JJ: I can't comment as I don't have sex or fight.

MRR: What has been the greatest asset to your musical development?
SAM: My chronic need for self-expression that is only satisfied by large, impromptu noises has been a great asset to my personal musical development.
EVAN: Alcohol.

MRR: Your greatest hindrance?
SAM: My crippling anxiety.
EVAN: Alcohol.
SPENCER: I think that the greatest asset and hindrance have both been living in Temecula.

We all had such a miserable time growing up out there, which is probably why we make the music that we do. It's hot and dry, there's virtually no music scene, and everybody is on meth or heroin. On the other hand, it's geographically a pretty shitty place to be in a punk band. It's hard to function unless you can constantly be driving out to Orange County or LA.
JJ: Our greatest asset is the World Wide Web. Our greatest hindrance is the unrelenting forward thrust of time.

MRR: Tell us about Edwin.
SAM: No.
SPENCER: Edwin Borsheim was the singer of a band called Kettle Cadaver that was also from Temecula back in the '90s and early 2000s. They're sort of well-known in certain circles, but most people I've talked to have never heard of them. They were mostly known for these DVDs that they used to release that were like 30-minute compilations of Edwin totally mutilating himself onstage. He would put nails through his dick and hooks through his face and torso; he fucked a dead coyote with a huge metal dildo, all kinds of wacky shit. Anyhow, in the past couple of years, I really got to know this guy, and I've taken a lot of interest in him.

He has this whole weird little world that he lives in, and he's sort of had an influence on me and the band. He lives out on this plot of land in Perris with his two dogs, and his place is just filled with all this medieval weaponry and torture devices that he made himself. He's a really bizarre guy. A friend and I have been making a documentary about him over the past year. It should be out in a couple months.

MRR: Tell us about the Man with the Hat.
SAM: You don't want to know about the Man with the Hat.
SPENCER: That was actually something that I didn't fully learn about until a couple of years ago. Apparently, the "Man with the Hat" is something that a lot of people who deal with sleep paralysis have experienced. I've had sleep paralysis for the past couple of years but never experienced any of the hallucinations that a lot of other people have. I guess from what my parents told me was that, as a toddler, I used to say that during the night the Man with the Hat was touching my feet. I'm not sure exactly what that means, but I know that the rest of my life I had a really strange complex about my feet, and I never knew why. I wrote an EP that sort of speculates on the reason why that was so traumatic for me.

MRR: Which piece of nonfiction has had the greatest impact on your worldview?
SAM: *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass.*
SPENCER: *The Gay Science* by Nietzsche.
JJ: My worldview is constantly changing. But as of right now, I'll say *Conversations with J.G. Ballard.* In the interviews, spanning over a couple decades, he talks about his takes on technological progression, virtual reality, narcissism, violence, aesthetics, psychopathology, political climates, surveillance, globalization, artificial environments' effects on peoples' minds, mass media, consumer culture, etc. A lot of what he talks about feels very relevant to me and my position in the world.

MRR: Which life experience has had the greatest impact on your worldview?
SAM: This experience involved dinner, my parents, a knife, and a sin.
EVAN: I once watched my grandmother die right in front of my eyes. After I saw that, I came to realize that every person is just a big pile of meat. And it made me sick.

MRR: Has your music influenced other people to do things they usually wouldn't?
SAM: I believe it has. I've seen some very nice people bleed with smiles on their faces.
EVAN: I would hope so. My boss told me once that when she listened to the Coltranes it made her sick to her stomach and made her feel like doing bad things.
SPENCER: One time, when we were in high school, we played in Temecula, and a bunch of jocks from our school came to the show. I brought a bunch of dead fish and started throwing them at everybody. One of the jocks picked up a fish and started tearing into it with his teeth and spitting it at people around him.
JJ: Yes. In general I've so often seen otherwise tame kids absolutely destroy each other and themselves. The music also once possessed me to head-butt Spencer, breaking his nose.

MRR: Has the music influenced you to do thing you normally wouldn't?
SAM: Yes.
EVAN: I became extremely self-destructive and extremely sexual. Conversely, it has allowed me to deal with a lot of anxiety and depression in my life.

MRR: Mostsurreal/hyperreal/real show related moment/experience/memory?
SAM: Spencer cheap-shot me while playing in Seattle once. I ended the set early and went for a walk. I came back, approached him at the bar, kissed his face, and told him that I loved him.
EVAN: When we were still in high school, a club wanted us to play at lunchtime for some stupid reason. Naturally, we said yes. I can't remember playing for so many fucking people ever, but the set was stopped about a minute in. The principal ripped the plugs from the sockets, but we kept playing. Then he started to take my drum set apart as I kept playing. He got so fucking mad that he grabbed me by my neck and ripped me from my throne. It was very violent, and it was pretty cool. He then decided that it was necessary to drag me to his office with his arm in a triangle chokehold around my neck. I threw my drums into the crowd of kids, and they all started laughing. I didn't even get into any trouble because he thought I was going to sue the school for being physically violent with me. So that was pretty cool.
JJ: I had a panic attack that almost killed me after a show in Portland while on tour during winter in freezing weather. It can be dangerous to keep things bottled up so tight. People can have such a strong urge to express themselves, and if they fight that urge, it can get to the point of being mentally crippling.

The Cat of Nine Tails *is out now on SPHC.*
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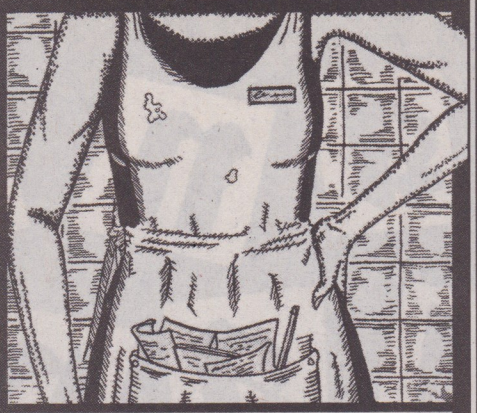

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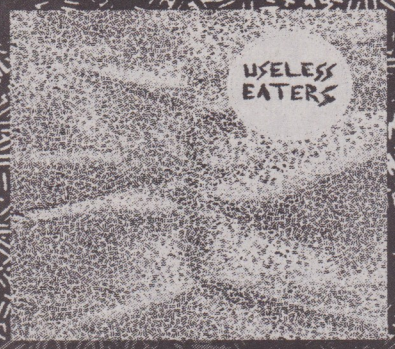

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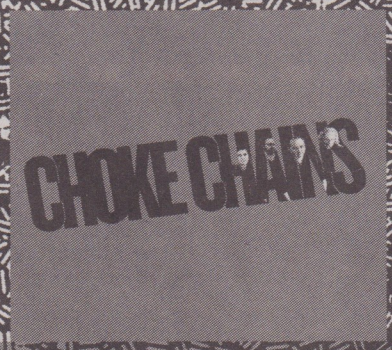

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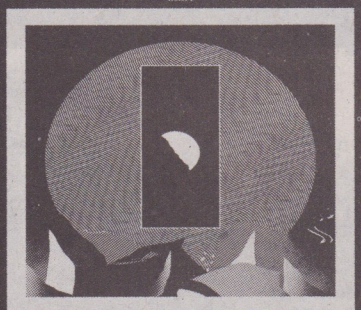

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manic relapse

Are you ready? Manic Relapse is coming: April 29th, 30th, and May 1st of 2016. This year's event will mark the biggest punk fest Oakland has ever seen.

Headlining bands include: '80s punk legends, Newtown Neurotics, from the UK; original crust, Crude SS, from Sweden; Guadalajara rockers, Los Monjo; crasher crust band Scumraid, from South Korea; Finnish-inspired Japanese hardcore, Kafka; Classic California anarcho-punk, Iconoclast, from LA; and Nova Scotian crust Napalm Raid. These are just a few of over the over forty bands that will be participating in this year's three-day punk fest. For some of them, it will be their first time ever playing in the United States. Oakland is about to blow up with studded, crusty party animals from all over North America and beyond. Last year, close to 1,000 punks came together to support Oakland's scene and to support the hardworking, self-motivated bands that have shaped who we are today.

How the fuck does this fest happen? Maybe we will find out in this interview with the Manic organizer (Anti) Christian A. Reid. Or maybe we'll never know and we'll just have to enjoy the disorder.

Interview by Amanda and John of Inciting Incident.
Photos provided by Carlos Garcia.

MRR: Manic Relapse is growing by leaps and bounds. Are you ready for the fourth edition?

No. Manic Relapse has gotten out of control! *[laughs]* We are making a lot of headway, but there is still a lot of work to be done. This year started out rough, but by the time the fest rolls around, everything will be in order.

MRR: We are so excited for this year's fest. The international lineup is out of hand! How did you land Newtown Neurotics? How did you get Crude SS? Scumraid?!

Newtown Neurotics have been a very important and influential band to me. They have gotten me through some of the darkest points in my life. Everything that happens at Manic is somehow relevant to the time and the events happening within that year. Lyrically, the band is very important to me. I have always agreed with their politics, and the stuff they were writing in the '80s is just as important today. Now more than ever the heartbreak songs and the fight for equality feel so relevant to me.

I met so many dead ends looking for the right headliner for this year's event. I honestly could not believe that Newtown Neurotics were immediately receptive. It was a total shot in the dark. They were surprised to find out that people still cared so much about them. This will be their first time playing in the States. *"Wake up and live."*

As far as Crude SS goes, I have been working on getting them for a few years. They have expressed interest in the past years but were not quite ready to come out here. At their time, Crude SS had the gnarliest sound, pioneering crust punk and spreading political anarchist messages with a tongue in cheek name. If you think of Discharge as the first apocalyptic sounding band, Crude SS was doing something similar but with a heavier and nastier sound. They were just another band I never

thought I would see. *"The system you hate is the system you support."*

I'm also stoked to see Scumraid again. Our tours collided in Japan around KAPUNK Fest. They really impressed me as a band and as people. Juyoung is an excellent photographer, and the band had a Korean pop-up restaurant with amazing food. We all got really drunk, and I ended up having to carry Sothira back to our hostel. We were a day behind them for our entire tour and we encountered them all over the country. I'm proud to have them as part of this fest. Mitchell and Kelsey with Dark Raids and Richard Ramos with Human Double Face did a great job coordinating their appearance.

I think it's really important that we get Los Monjo into the States. It's really unfair that Latin Americans have to go through such a strenuous process to come here. I think one of the most powerful things the fest has done is try to break down the walls of discrimination and unjust policies. Manic has always been an all-inclusive fest and tries to empower everyone as equals. Having Los Monjo is really important to that ideology. Josh Carman from MMM Discos has done an excellent job navigating visas and making sure that this appearance happens. I'm really excited to see them. Not only do they play excellent music, but I've heard they give one of the best live performances.

Kafka is one of my favorite current bands not only because their sound is based around an obsession with Finnish hardcore, but also they are somewhat of a sister band to Korrosive. I developed a good friendship with Moto after inviting Morpheme to Manic last year and visiting Tokyo. And Hal (formerly Drop End) was my first Japanese pen pal.

MRR: I can't believe this is all coming together like this. What other bands should we be excited to see?

We have some of the best current hardcore punk bands in the world coming together for this fest; Frenzy, Sadist, Tørsö, and Mutant Itch, just to name a few. Really, though, I'm excited to see the Younger Lovers. But seriously, every band on the bill is great. If you can make it to every show, you should be there!

MRR: The addition of the Younger Lovers is interesting! A POC queer pop band stands out on this predominantly hardcore / punk / crasher crust / rocker fest. Do you plan on expanding the fest in coming years to include other genres? Why weren't others included in the past?

I'm happy to invite Younger Lovers, especially because they come from different sub scene. We have always strived to be all-inclusive, and my interests are very broad. In the past, I have heard people complain about not being able to escape hardcore punk, and I want everyone to be able to enjoy this fest.

MRR: Are there any new bands that have caught your eye that we should look out for? I've seen your latest project, Odio, and it was intense! Will everyone get a chance to see Odio at the fest?

There are quite a few new bands popping up, and I've been excited to see the new crop. We made sure to add a handful of up and coming bands. *Don't miss:* Remnants, Violence, Fundamental, Cinderblock, PMS 84, Erradict, Syndicate, No Peace, and my new band, Odio.

MRR: Alright, alright. In the past years we have seen a lot of passed-out punkers, shotgunning beer, liquor chugging. For fuck's sake the second year I swear I saw two monkeys and smelled a gas leak at an after show. Is Manic Relapse just a party fest?

I don't know. People will choose to do what they want to do, and we are not telling anyone how to act. Our aim is to bring good music to Oakland and to show people bands that none of us ever thought we would see in our lifetimes. We want to showcase our scene for outsiders and support hardworking DIY ethics, and give opportunities that were never expected. We encourage people to have a good time, whether that be through drinking, being sober, or whatever; they are all welcome here. Well, so long as everyone is here to enjoy punk!

MRR: Is this a safe space?

No, this is not a safe place. Oakland in general is not a safe place. That is to say: it is not a safe place for oppressive people, sexists, racist, or bigots of any kind. We strive to look out for each other in this scene, and people that are trying to hurt people, physically or otherwise, will be dealt with accordingly.

MRR: Do you have any advice for people who are visiting Oakland for the first time?

Stay safe, mind your manners, keep an eye open as to what is going on around you. People need to respect the neighborhoods and walk in groups. The law can be lenient here, but it's always import to respect the locals and our community.

MRR: I see that all the shows this year are open to all ages. What is the importance of doing this?

Manic Relapse has always been all ages. I fully believe that without the youth, punk is dead. Kids need to go to shows because if they don't have a positive influence or the correct outlets they are going to find other avenues. They could do something awful. Like become a cop. Having all-ages shows gives everyone a chance to let loose and be themselves. Younger punks remind us why we are doing this in the first place. Twenty-one and up clubs become stale without the freedom of youth, and nobody should be restricted due to age or anything else they can't control. We have to remember to stay young until we die.

MRR: That is solid rationale. What are some of the things you would suggest to outsiders while visiting the Bay Area?

The Piedmont Cemetery is one of the most beautiful places in Oakland. It's great for a bird's eye view of the entire Bay Area while checking out a historic graveyard. There are countless excellent restaurants and bars like Abura-Ya, Annex Burger, and Beer Revolution, which are across the street from the main venue (the Metro in Jack London Square). I would say Eli's and Golden Bull are the best punk bars to visit. Analog and Nature both have good vegan options. As far as record stores go, 1-2-3-4 Go! and Econo Jam are in Oakland, and Thrillhouse is worth a visit if you are in San Francisco.

The Landfill, AKA the Albany Bulb, is a great place for an outdoor adventure, and there are plenty more abandoned, condemned, or otherwise ill-advised locations to visit, but you know, what we do is secret. Ask a punk.

MRR: I like the sound of that. Tell us more about how this fest began.

It's really funny how our first year was two shows with less than two hundred people. It only made sense financially because I was peddling out bowls of my "famous vegan chili." By the end of the night, we were doing keg stands outside of the Swamp. Then, just one year later, at Volume Two, it was insane! It was held at a huge venue that was a historic rock'n'roll club that fucking Jimi Hendrix played at. It was a packed room with a very underprepared staff. We drank the bar dry within two bands. People were jumping off the balcony. The room exploded. 1984, performing Crucifix songs with their original singer and guitar player, was something that was never supposed to happen. The excitement in the air that night, it was boiling, I don't know if I will ever feel anything like that again. After that night, everybody knew what Manic was.

We have seen the fest grow so much, seeing punk legends Appendix play with Terveet Kädet, accompanied by World Burns to Death, Morpheme, Aspects of War, Who Killed Spikey Jacket?, Generacion Suicida, and ton of other bands that were killing it last year. Somehow every year just gets better and better.

MRR: Damn, this all seems like a lot to handle. Do you have help?

In the years past, a lot of the booking and organizing was a solo project. However, Taylor Renee and Sad Kyle did have helping hands, especially with production, the door, and making sure the event was handled. Now that the fest has grown, I've decided to include and put together a team of hardworking punk promoters to make it more of a community effort. This year wouldn't have happened without the help of Mitchell and Kelsey (Dark Raids), Josh Carman (MMM Discos), Richard Ramos (Human Double Face), you and John Khan (Inciting Incident), and Justin Ennis (Golden Bull).

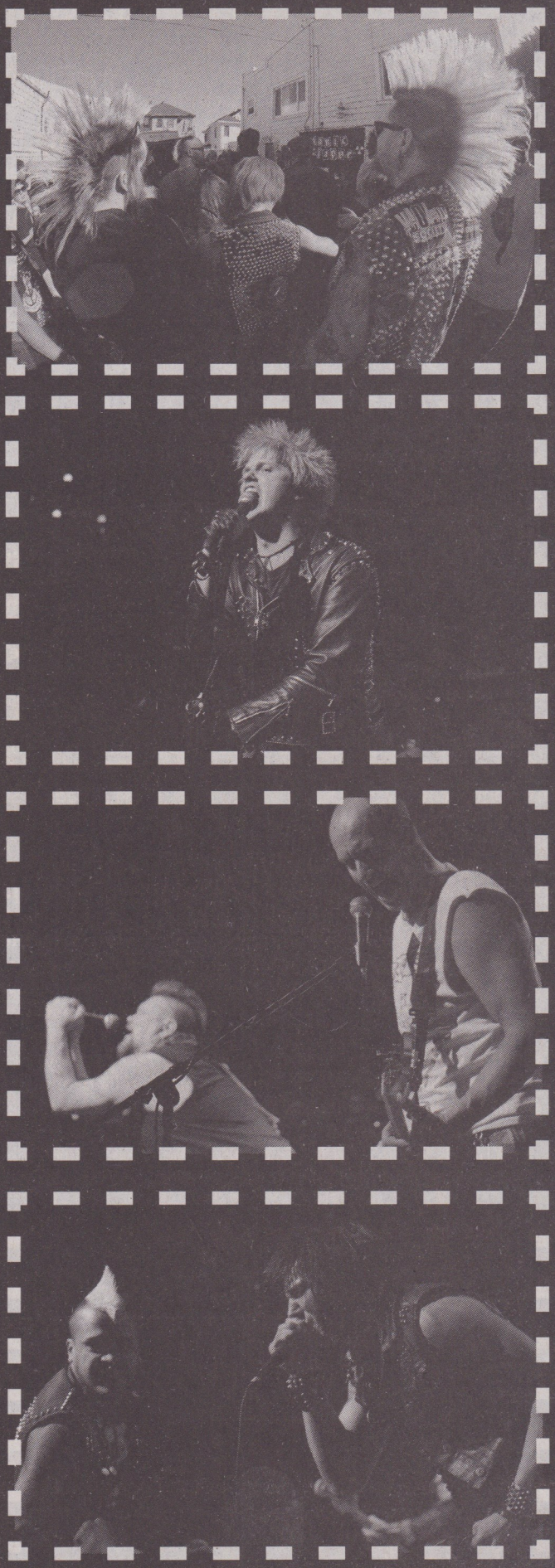
MRR: Yes, the beast does continue to grow. Now tell me what fest would you throw if you were unhindered by finances, distance, and death. What top three bands, living or dead, would headline your dream fest?

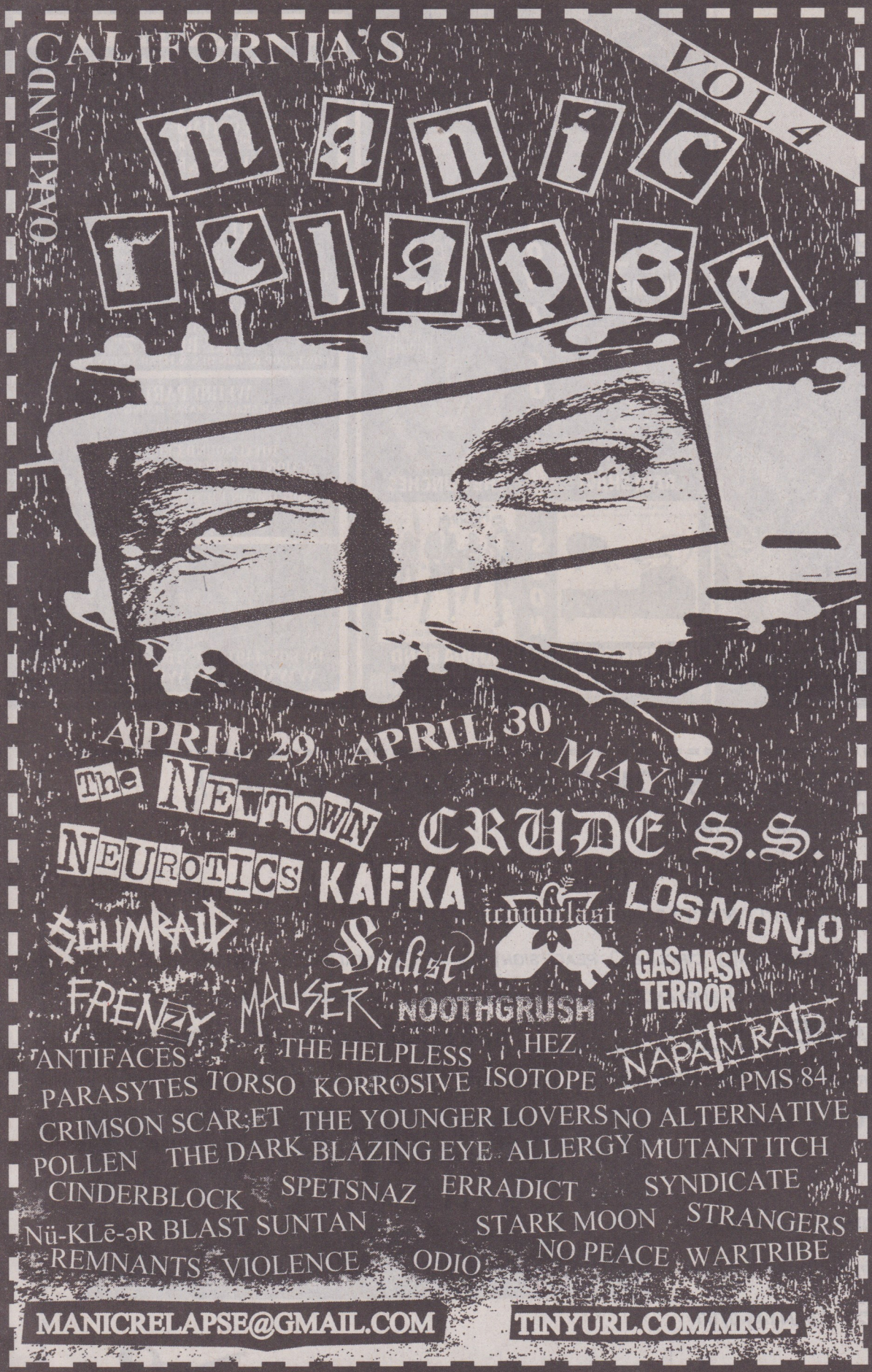
Without even having to think about it, I would have Kaaos, and obviously Disclose. And Thin Lizzy, duh. But really, there are some amazing legends that are becoming active again that we would love to get out here. Yet the future is unwritten, "crash the pose." Maybe one day my "nih nightmares" will come true.

MRR: Alright, I see what you're saying. Well, thanks for your time, Chris. Do you have anything else you would like to add?

Thanks for the interview. I'm very excited for this year's fest. I hope to see everyone out here this year! Fight the system, fight back!

For information and updates, follow facebook.com/manicrelapsefest.





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Scumraid
Zoloa
Nu-kle-er Blast Suntan
Stark Moon

Friday Main Show
@ Oakland MEtro
The Iconoclast
Gasmask Terror
HEZ
The Helpless
Parasytes
Allergy
Pollen
Isotope
No Peace
Odio
Erradict

Friday After Show
@ WRC in the Basement
Kafka
Sadist

Saturday Day Show
@ WRC, Outside
Los Monjo
Korrosive
PMS84
Cinderblock
Violence

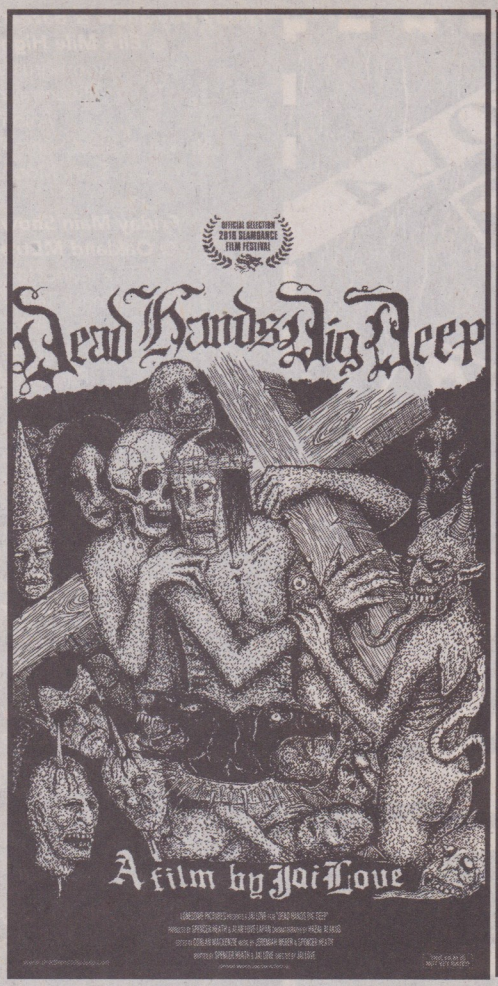
Saturday Main Show
@ Oakland Metro
Newtown Neurotics
Crude SS
Kafka
Scumraid
Napalm Raid
Blazing Eye
Sadist
Frenzy
Mauser
Mutant Itch
Torso
The Dark

Saturday After Show
@ Castro House
Born/Dead
Fundamental
La Equi

Saturday After Show
@ the Command Center
Crimson Scarlet and DJ

Sunday Day Show
@ 1-2-3-4 Go!
Steel Chains
Anti Faces
Strange Faces

Sunday Main Show
@ 924 Gilman
Newtown Neurotics
Los Monjo
Younger Lovers
No Alternative
Strangers
Syndicate
Remnants
Wartribe



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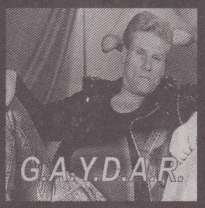

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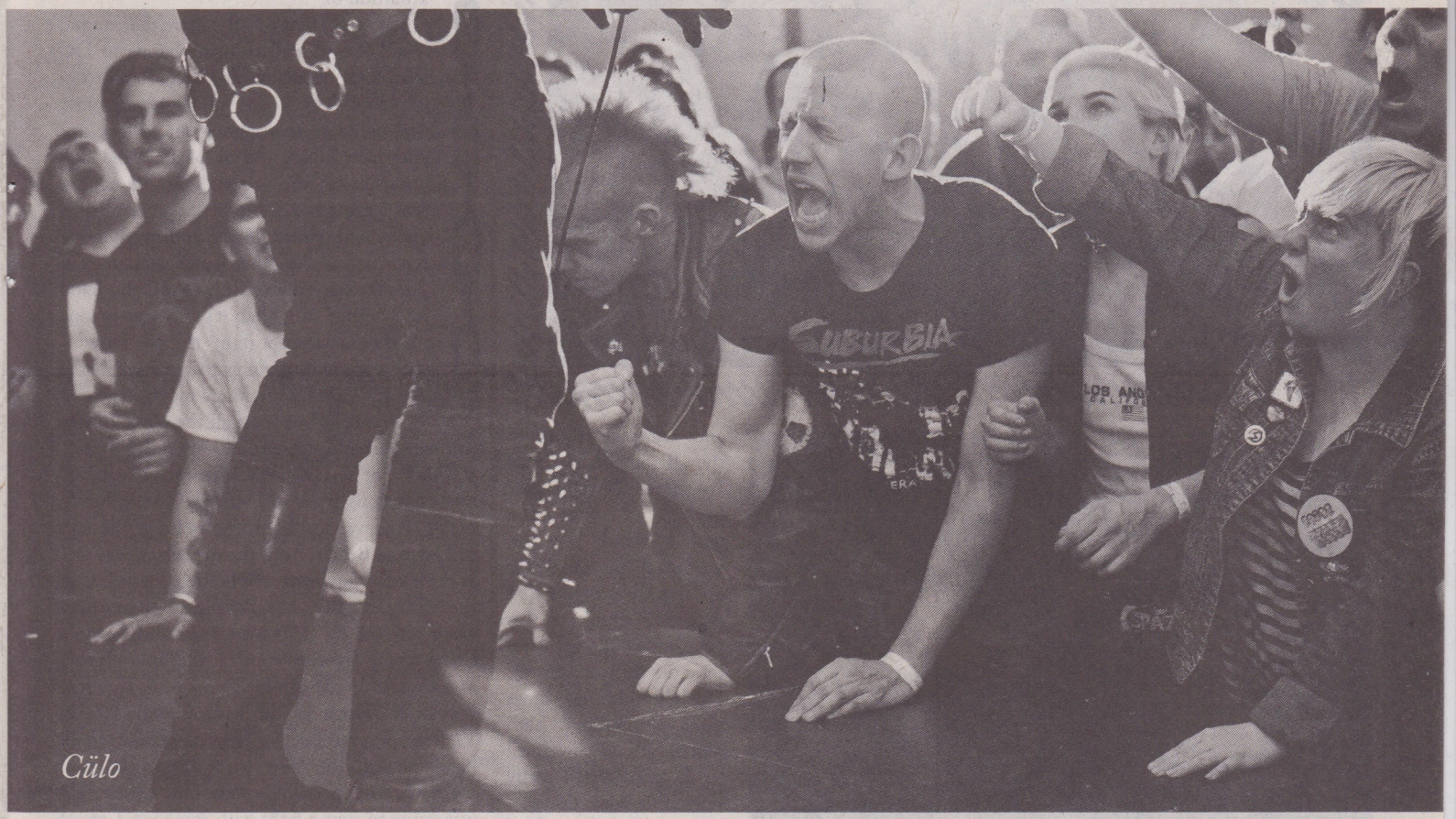

Cülo

Chris Moore and Nick "Nicktape" Candela have been staples of the DC hardcore scene for over a decade now. In 2013 they threw the first Damaged City Fest, which has only continued to get bigger, better, and more musically diverse each year. This April, hardcore devotees from the Eastern Seaboard and beyond will descend upon Washington, DC for a long weekend of moshing, debauchery, late night Jumbo Slices, and so forth. Nick and Chris answered some questions about the origins of the fest, its inner workings, and their thoughts on a city with a rich punk history but its own unique present.

Introduction and interview by Dan Goetz.
Photos by Angela Owens.

MRR: Nick and Chris, you have been playing in bands and booking shows both together and separately for a very long time. How did you get into punk, and what made you want to book shows?

Nick: I got into punk through my older sister, Emily, who I idolized as a child. She first got me into skateboarding. I used to borrow all of her Minor Threat and 7 Seconds CDs and make my own tapes. I read all of her zines. I began mail ordering the cheapest records I could find ads for (Havoc and Beer City both offered 5 for $10 ppd 7"s). I started to obsess over all of this stuff until she finally took me to see Crispus Attucks, a cool political, local DC hardcore band, play a show in the summer of 2001. It was such a weird experience seeing everyone with green hair, passing out flyers for nuclear protests, and the opening bands soliciting people to buy their demo tapes for a dollar. That show completely turned my reality upside down.

As you can imagine, I had to start my own bands after this inner-revolution took place. I was friends with these two Indonesian punkers in my high school: Chino and Andre. We discovered the music together and ultimately started our first band. I think it's a pretty logical step going from starting a band that nobody has ever heard of (or likes) to eventually setting up shows. DIY becomes the only means of survival at that point. At that time, the "real deal" DCHC scene hadn't quite accepted our pimply-face suburban hardcore, so we had to organize our own shows. Chris and I ended up joining forces about three years later when we started Coke Bust. We went on tour with the band for the first time, and after everyone set up shows for us, we owed the favor to a lot of folks. One thing just led to another and we never really stopped (both individually and as a team).

Chris: My first exposure to "punk" was when I was in third grade. I was living on a navy base in El Centro, California. My parents had just gotten divorced and my mom and I were going to move back to the DC area. As a going away gift one of my dad's friends gave me a tape of Green Day's *Dookie*. It wasn't until a year or two later that the tape really clicked with me. My mom grew up in DC in the '80s, and a lot of her friends were punks, but she was more into New Wave. She was always showing me new music. The first

Rival Mob

two pieces of music I got from her were *Cosmic Thing* by the B-52s and Madonna's *Immaculate Collection*. I think she saw my fascination with punk so she took me to Smash Records in Georgetown. She told me I could pick out two CDs, so I just grabbed what looked cool: Dead Kennedys *Bedtime for Democracy* and Bad Religion *No Control*.

I got a flyer at Smash for a show a local punk band called the Goons were playing. I was thirteen or fourteen so my mom drove me. It was a life-changing experience. My friend Nick Nazdin and I started our first band together when we were thirteen or so—Munk Petal, you know, like Punk Metal? I think our goal was to play songs that sounded like the Misfits and Black Sabbath. The outcome didn't sound like either.

We had another band, TCA, that played a coffee house show in ninth grade. Our friends started moshing. The principal and security guards came and stopped the show. I called my mom and asked if we could move the show to our basement. The band and about fifteen other kids walked over to my mom's house and had the show in the basement. It was awesome. I remember having a conversation with a friend: "We can do this all the time!" It's not like we were the first people to think of this idea but at the time we thought we were. So we continued to do shows there throughout high school. It wasn't until tenth grade that I really started to book shows. I had just gotten back from my first tour and felt the need to return the favor for all the people that helped us out.

MRR: What originally inspired the jump from doing shows to doing a fest? Was there anything specific that you were trying to accomplish?

Nick: Coke Bust was on tour somewhere in Europe and we had an overnight drive. Chris and I were probably both pretty jazzed on Club Mate and we were talking all night... just reflecting on the tour that we were on and talking about a lot of the festivals that we were playing. We started to talk about the things we liked and the things we didn't like. "If that was my fest, I would have invited a few more bands that sounded more like _____," etc. etc. "Dude...we should just do that!"

We started writing down ideas for bands to ask. The first band we ended up asking was Double Negative. They agreed to it, and the fest just sprung from there. Chris and I envisioned a hardcore punk festival that didn't have a professional atmosphere. Something that felt like a show. We kept bringing up Florida's This Is For You Fest and the various aspects that we liked about it. We loved the diversity of the bands, we loved the DIY atmosphere, the low cost, and the good vibe. We really liked the idea of asking foreign bands to play and highlighting some of the stuff that we thought ripped but nobody paid attention to.

Chris: Yeah, that was the drive that started it all! We wanted to bring bands to DC that don't normally play here, have a ton of people check out all the good punk and hardcore that comes out of this city, and have it in a cool place. Vibe and atmosphere are everything. You can see a great band, but if it's at a terrible venue with shitty people and overbearing security and the other bands suck, then it doesn't really matter how good the band is. Making sure that it's all ages is one of the most important things. How is your community going to grow when the twenty/thirty-somethings move away and there is no one left because all the punk-thirsty thirteen-year-olds weren't allowed into shows?

This Is For You Fest was awesome. A very cool mix of various types of hardcore, punk, thrash, metal, whatever inside of this weird warehouse in Daytona Beach. Billy, the organizer, was one of the coolest guys ever, and getting out of DC in the winter was awesome. Pointless Fest in Philly was really the fest that blew my mind, though. Some of my favorite bands at the time playing at a church! What the fuck?! So cool. Totalitär, Inepsy, No Hope for the Kids, Caustic Christ, Victims, Severed Head of State...so many great bands played! The shows were always cool, but there was a big possibility that some traveler kid was going to start a fight with someone. Lots of kids just hanging outside of the shows starting shit with other people. During the last year, there was a huge fight that they started with security/police that shut down the fest.

MRR: Talk about some of the planning and organizing process for the fest. Even though you two are primarily behind things, do you feel it's a community effort?

Nick: I would definitely say that it's a community effort. When we started, we had no strict set of ideas for how we wanted everything to go. We just wanted to set up a cool punk festival that kind of put/kept DC on the map and brought people together from a lot of crazy, far away places. For example, when we reserve the venue, we speak to Mark Andersen of Positive Force. He and their community have had a lot of cool ideas/input/physical help with the festival and it's been very much welcome. Countless folks from DC are involved as well...bringing backline, helping us at the door, protecting the speakers when people lose it. Then of course there are the real true believers who help me pick up the cigarette butts out of the gravel every year at 4:00 a.m. Those people rule. So yeah—it's a total group process in that regard.

Chris and I talk on the phone every day and we constantly bully each other into taking care

of our various loose ends (of which there are an unimaginable amount) every year. This is actually my favorite part of the festival... bugging the shit out of Chris.

Chris: It's probably the halfway point between the end of the last fest and the start of the upcoming one where Nick and I get really annoyed at each other and get into arguments about various details. Neither of us really have set tasks. We just split up everything we have to do and do it that way. We end up helping each other with things if we run into a snag. The both of us can be very persistent and annoying at times, but sometimes that's just how it's gotta be to get something done. The Nick and Chris punishment sandwich.

Nick is a little more on top of his shit than I am when it comes to organization. I often bite off way more than I can chew. I play in five bands, run a dog walking business, work other side jobs, book shows, etc, so I end up being extremely scatterbrained, forgetting about things, double booking myself, and pissing people off. I am often reminded of this by Nick and my wife, Sheena. I couldn't imagine life any other way!

Nick is right, though. It's a total community effort. We have so much support from friends, kids in this city, the record shops, the venues, etc. Mark Andersen and Positive Force always work the fest, help find venues, etc. Robin Zeijlon from Pure Disgust, Jon Matthews, and Tom Henry are the true heroes that help out every year. Without Robin and Jon stage managing there is no way we would be able to stick to the schedule. Tom keeps the peace, diffuses the fireworks, and makes sure no one is being an asshole. Spinach was like the Swiss Army knife last year. He did everything. Not to mention all the people helping drive bands around, making runs for supplies, cooking food etc. It's really inspiring and we couldn't be more grateful.

MRR: How has it done financially over the years? Nick, does that Economics degree help at all?

Nick: I should have majored in finance. I remember last year we had a real moment of panic because I went to Chris' house the day before the festival started and we were looking at the Excel spreadsheet that had the sum of money from tickets to the (sold out) festival right next to the sum of money that we were hoping to pay to each of the bands. There was a very large, negative discrepancy. In the end, we sold a lot of water and veggie dogs, so we actually ended up making that money back. So far the festival has done OK, but we basically set our costs with the fest selling out each year. That's why we go so hard trying to promote it and trying to get people to come. It's all out of fear.

Chris: I don't know if Nick's Econ degree helps, but his math skills sure do. I failed consumer math twice. Mainly because I was stoned, but I still suck at math. So far we haven't eaten it that hard.

MRR: The fest's main Friday and Saturday shows have always been at St. Stephen's, a venue with a long-standing connection with punk in DC. Has this been a conscious decision? Have you ever thought about working with different venues?

Nick: We always prefer to have the main shows of the festival at a DIY spot like a church, community center, university hall, pool hall, etc. Those were the best places to see shows with the best vibes. I always loved the self-governing aspect of that. Punks setting up shows for punks, with punks coming out and regulating themselves. It's still like that now and I think that's very much a conscious decision. I wouldn't say that the fest is married to that one particular venue, but we have been lucky in the past that it has always been available.

Chris: St. Stephen's is amazing. I've been going to shows there since I was in high school and started helping out with Positive Force towards the end. It's a cool room, has a good vibe, and is in a relatively central part of the city. The people who work there have always been extremely kind and gracious to us and the hundreds of people coming in and out of it. Say what you will about churches but this one in particular serves food to the homeless and various radical organizations have rooms [of their own], there is a hackers club, protesters can sleep on the floor, Ian MacKaye's dad is a pastor, and they host wild punk shows. If that is not a cool church, I don't know what is!

Nothing lasts forever, though. There is a threshold for how patient and accepting venues can be when it comes to hosting punk shows and unfortunately that can be very limited. We really have to respect the spaces and not take them for granted. We are constantly looking for new spots to do shows in DC. Like most punk communities, it's a never-ending battle.

MRR: How did you make the connection with the dance studio where the Sunday shows happen? I remember being surprised that someone didn't mosh out of the plate glass window and fall to their death.

Nick: The Dance Hall Institute is another community-based establishment that Mark Andersen from Positive Force has a good relationship with. When we ask Mark if we can use either St. Stephen's Church for the main show or a smaller venue like the Dance Hall Institute, he takes no money for himself and the venues themselves actually take nothing. All the money is given to a local charity, We Are Family, which helps feed and take care of local, low-income, elderly folks. It's a good feeling knowing that the money that's raised from the show is going to a cool cause. We also have a tremendous amount of respect for the venues that forgo this opportunity to make some quick cash (as we would totally be happy to rent the space from them directly if this charitable scheme wasn't in place). It's all a giant network of trust, and I'm happy that we can play our small part in this puzzle. Mark deserves a lot of props for this, I think. He busts his ass behind the scenes to uphold this network.

Chris: What Nick said. One of the tricky things about using spaces like this and the

Boston Strangler

church is that we always have to be on our tippy toes. There is not a lot of room for error and we don't want to sever these sometimes hard-to-build relationships. You're right, though. The glass was something we were very nervous about. Especially during Infest!

MRR: What have you learned in the four years of the fest?

Nick: In some ways I am so moved and inspired by the people who seem to believe in this festival and what it's about more than I do. On the other hand, I'm consistently let down, bummed out, and often even feel betrayed by some of the whack attitudes that something of this magnitude inevitably bring out. I don't need to go into the specifics, but I will say that all of it has taught me a lot of lessons. I don't want to sound negative, though. I'm truly inspired by the people and bands that travel from so far away. There's something that I think is really fucking cool about a room full of people from various geographic corners, various genders, orientations, ages, socio-economic backgrounds, and—more broadly—just of different interests. When that common ground is reached, it's a sick feeling.

Chris: I feel the fest itself has changed a bit, but the goal is still the same: Bring great bands to DC, show the world that DC has some sick hardcore punk bands and is a great place to play. At one point it was like pulling teeth to get bands to come here. You had to beg them. So many of them would play Baltimore and skip over DC or just not even come to the DELMARVA area.

I think most show/fest promoters, zine makers, and bands know that the more something you are doing is getting noticed, the more it is criticized. Dealing with that criticism in a levelheaded, constructive way is always a challenge. Sometimes it's easy to feel helpless, totally defeated and just want to give up when presented with certain situations. What gets me through is thinking about the people that come up to Nick and I and say what a good time they had, what country they came from, "I never heard of them and they were sick," "I go every year," "Can't wait for next year," etc. That makes it all worth it.

MRR: What are some of the best and worst moments of past fests?

Nick: The best moment for me was and will always be that time when Infest played "My World, My Way." The entire room was moshing, the floor was shaking, everyone was screaming along...but there was no bullshit. There wasn't really a "violent" vibe. It was just a thing of beauty. If I was religious, that is what I would imagine heaven being like. After all... I was already in a church.

Pure Disgust

The worst moment was probably a last-minute logistical disaster. There was an instance where we had a huge line getting into the church one day, and a lot of people missed the first band. Another real heartbreaker was getting the final word that Herätys from Sweden/Finland weren't able to make it to play two days beforehand. That one still stings the hardest. I can only imagine what would have been.

Chris: We flew Los Crudos out and put them up in a hotel the year they played. I got a call from one of them saying something along the lines of "Not trying to be a dick, but this room has bunch of dead rats and mice everywhere. Just saying, you might want to get a refund." I got that call around 2:00 a.m. right after playing a set and my mind melted. I felt so fucking bad. I was able to find another spot across the street for them to stay that night. When I went to go get the refund the guy didn't even ask why, he was just like "Oh yeah, here you go." I'm guessing it's not unusual.

One of the best moments for me was the first year when 86 Mentality played. Nick and I harassed the *fuck* out of each member (Nick and Chris punishment sandwich) for months and finally they agreed to it but only if it was unannounced and we told nobody. People were starting to guess who the *secret guest* was and were hounding us. Keeping it secret was really hard, but it totally paid off when those guys walked on stage and people started freaking out. The second the first chord was hit the whole room was moving. I believe the guitar cut out for a second during "Intro/Life Trap" and you could hear everyone go "OOOOOOHHHH." Negative Approach right afterward was unreal. I got this feeling of relief because they were the last band on the main show, no one died, and it seemed like an overwhelming success. If that church crumbled it wouldn't have mattered because that moment right there felt so good.

MRR: The fest has been quite male dominated in years past, though I've noticed that this year there are a few more bands with women than before. Is this year's lineup an attempt to address this at all, or have you otherwise taken criticism for this?

Nick: I would say that since the fest started it has been a priority to include other races, genders, geographically-located, and more-vocalized other sexual orientations than the prevailing demographic. At the same time, I definitely think that I/we think about this stuff more and more as we get older and wiser, you know? I think that each year of the fest has evolved into something more and more diverse, and I like that trajectory.

Chris: It's hard not to make your fest seem like a boys' club. We try to be as inclusive as possible, but at the same time we aren't into booking bands in a way that tokenizes members. That in itself is problematic. We book bands that we like, plain and simple.

MRR: What do you feel sets DC apart from other cities and hardcore scenes? I've always felt that from the Dischord days through today there's a major sense of regional hardcore pride that I almost never see in other places these days.

Chris: What I really like about DC is that there is always an influx of younger kids. Also

hardcore, punk, indie, experimental, whatever shows are 99% all ages. When I was younger and going to punk shows, not all of the older generation were as welcoming. At times it made me disenchanted with punk. I often thought, "If everyone is an asshole, why do I want to be a part of this?" I eventually met some cooler older guys that I could nerd out with and they put my band on some shows. I try my best to help the younger kids out, whether it's putting their bands on shows, finding them venues, putting them in touch with other people, helping them with tours etc. Nick has also helped put out some records and tapes. I think a good chunk of the older punk and hardcore people in DC these days are more open to that idea.

Most people aren't from "DC" and are from the suburbs or from somewhere else, but who really cares? DC is such a transient city. People don't stick around for that long. The people that are around for a bit really support each other. Since the '70s, this city has churned out a lot of really good punk and hardcore, but I would say that in the last five years it's better than it's ever been. I don't know if proud is the right word, but I think you need to be somewhat excited about the city you live in or at least support the other people in it if you want it to get better.

MRR: I've also felt like DIY punk and hardcore in DC is a lot less affected by what's going on in a lot of US cities with more name recognition and the trends that they latch onto. Do you think the fest has noticeably changed outside perceptions of or brought additional attention to hardcore in DC? Has this been positive or negative? Or does it even matter?

Nick: I think DC has always kind of done whatever it's going to do. This has caused the city to be a hub of cool punk stuff (like right now), or a place that nobody cares about stopping on their tour (if you were around in 2005 you remember every tour itinerary jumping from Philadelphia to Richmond). 86 Mentality played basements to ten people and then the festival exploded when people merely heard rumors of their set. I think trying to keep a pulse on punk and hardcore is so impossible that it's a losing game and there's no point in following trends, analyzing them, finding out hypocrisies, or analyzing who is a poseur vs. who is not. So I'll go for the last option you presented: doesn't matter. I will also say that DC has always been lucky in the grand scheme of things. We're from the United States, the same city as the two best hardcore bands on earth (Bad Brains and Minor Threat), and the country that speaks what is known as the "universal language." The rest of the world watches our media and our various outlets of disseminating information (*MRR* is another example). DC and a lot of the people in it (past/future/present) deserve props, but at the same time I think we need to realize this imbalance...

Chris: I agree, I don't think punk in DC has typically assimilated trends going on outside of the area. Like I was saying before, you used to have to beg people to come here to play. I don't want to sound ungrateful or anything because I know it's much harder to get people to come and play in small towns. We have had it pretty good. I just think that there is this skewed perception of DC because it's a major city and Minor Threat was from here. Don't get me wrong, the first fifteen Dischord releases are some of my favorite records of all time, but I try not to get wrapped up too much in the past. Another thing is all the historic punk documentaries coming out. As cool as some of them are, I think people tend to overlook what's currently going on.

As far as if the fest changing people's perception of DC, I don't know. If it has, I hope so for the better! I mean, that was one of the points of the fest—To get people more interested in the shit that's going on in the city. If anything, I think it has maybe created some momentum and gotten people more excited about punk in this area.

MRR: I've also noticed that over the four years there has been somewhat of a stylistic expansion with the bands playing, and last year I definitely saw it more reflected in the crowd. What would you say is the reason for this?

Nick: It's hard to say because branching the styles out wasn't something we made a conscious effort to do. Sometimes the way the fest comes together is so incredibly random. We asked the Marked Men to play the same year Infest ended up headlining, for example. I think that many of

Los Crudos

Infest

the other bands that agreed to come to DC to play that show would have been different if we had a different headliner, you know? I think that some of the headliners end up having a lot of influence on what other bands agree to play, which is understandable. In rare cases, it's also funny to see what bands drop when other bands have to cancel.

Chris: When we plan every year, the list of bands we want to ask is actually pretty all over the place, but to anyone who books shows, you know it doesn't always turn out the way you want.

MRR: In addition to other more recent life developments, such as Chris getting married and starting a dog walking company and Nick moving to Brazil, has fest planning affected your ability to book as many regular shows as you have in the past? I'm kinda surprised either of you have any free time at all.

Nick: Man, it's definitely not easy. I still call Chris regularly on Google Voice and I can still harass him all the way from Brazil. It's just about staying organized and trying to not fall off this unofficial timeline that we have somehow fallen into. But we are used to the chaos and used to the madness. My relocation to Brazil has obviously halted my ability to book shows in DC, although I will say that there are plenty of other people who seem to be doing a good job of that in DC now. I recently organized my first show in São Paulo, which is going to go down next week. I'm also very nervous and pumped for that.

Chris: Starting the dog walking business has definitely taken up a lot of my free time, but the ultimate goal is having the flexibility of doing what I want when I want and not worrying about losing my job when I come home from tour. I play drums in Coke Bust, Sick Fix, D.O.C., Repulsion, the Rememberables, and do sound for shows. Still consistently busy! In general I have been booking fewer shows, but it's mainly because I want to be able to put as much energy and time into the shows I have booked rather then half ass twice as many. You're really not doing anyone a favor by booking a show you can't promote.

MRR: If someone coming out to the fest has never been to DC before, what would your ideal DC day be like?

Nick: I think you should take a chance, try to meet/touch base with some locals before you come into town, and find some punks to crash with. Your experience will always be cooler than staying in some hotel far away. Hydrate super hard before the fest, and go see some cool DC tourist shit. Go check out the Georgetown waterfront, see the monuments (only at night), order the fried chicken sandwich from Everlasting Life (killer all vegan soul food, now called Nu Vegan). When at the fest, meet lots of other people, mosh to every band, rep your local city *super* hard (wear that GUATEMALA STRAIGHTEDGE hoodie), go to the aftershow at the Pinch, mosh some more, hydrate, and then finish your night off at Duccini's with some refreshing jumbo slice (also vegan-friendly, if you swing that way). By day three you will feel like total garbage, you'll have shin-bruises, and you will get sick from sharing a Slurpee with that weird looking bearded guy from Buffalo who lives in a trash house. Find the tall Scandinavian guy with good posture. He's really nice.

Chris: What Nick said. Also the Cherry Blossom Festival happens around the same time. Checking out all the cherry blossoms downtown is pretty awesome. Almost all of the art, history, and science museums are free and worth checking out, if that's your thing. Lots of cool record stores: Smash, Joint Custody, Crooked Beat, Som, Joe's Record Paradise. Pinball at Lyman's and the Black Cat. Sunrise Carribean food. Tons of good Ethiopian and Salvadorian food. Sticky Fingers vegan bakery. Exorcist stairs and Dischord house. Hang out in Rock Creek Park. Meet some new people.

MRR: Personally, kale and quinoa power salads from Sticky Fingers have saved my ass from feeling like garbage on the third day. Anything else you want to add?

Nick: I was just kidding about the Buffalo thing. That was a joke. We love you, Biff.

Chris: Truth be told, a bunch of people did get sick from sharing that giant Slurpee container. I want to say Laura and Biff were to blame but, you know, it brought people together! Maximum respect and love.

Damaged City Fest 2016 will take place between April 7–10 in Washington DC. You can go to damaged-city.com for more information.

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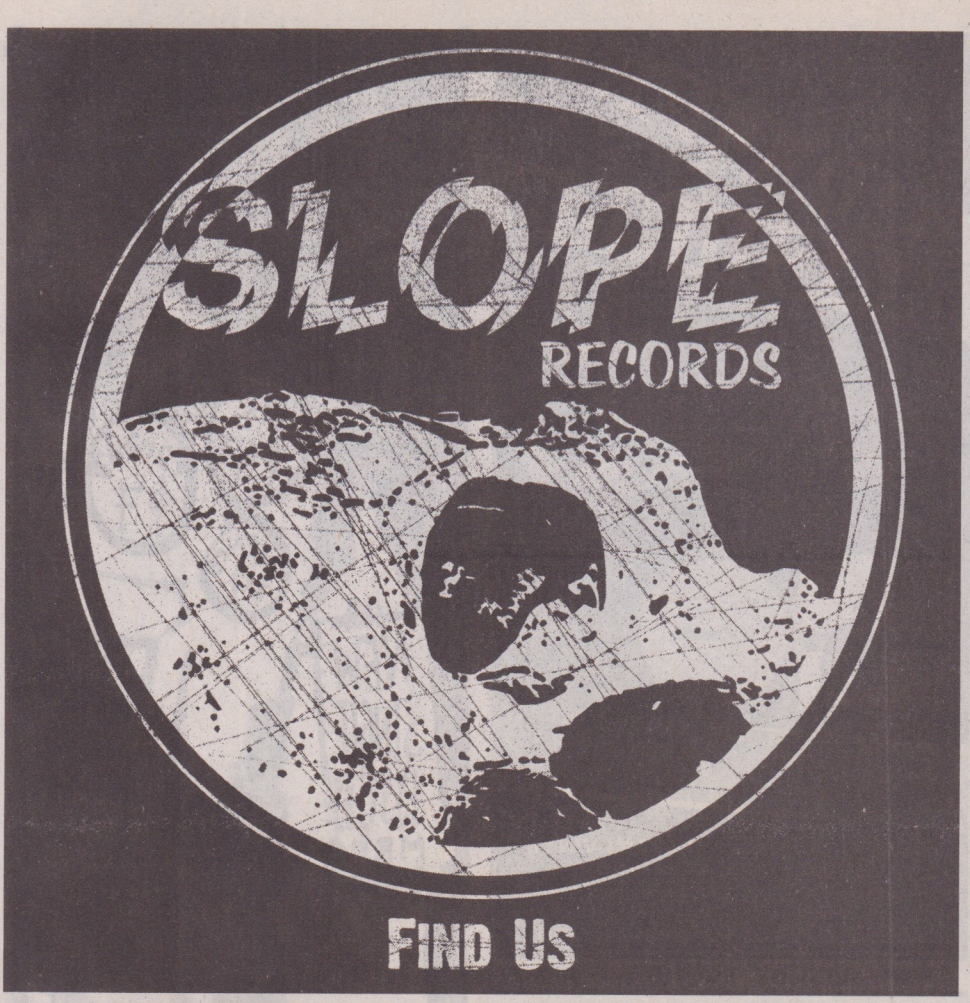

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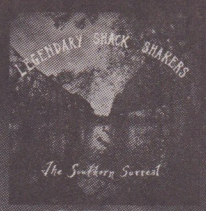

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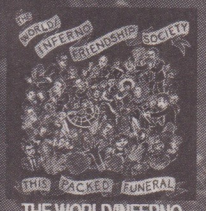

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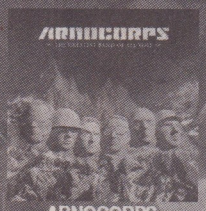

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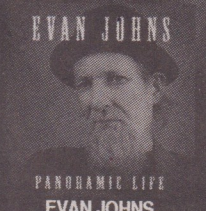

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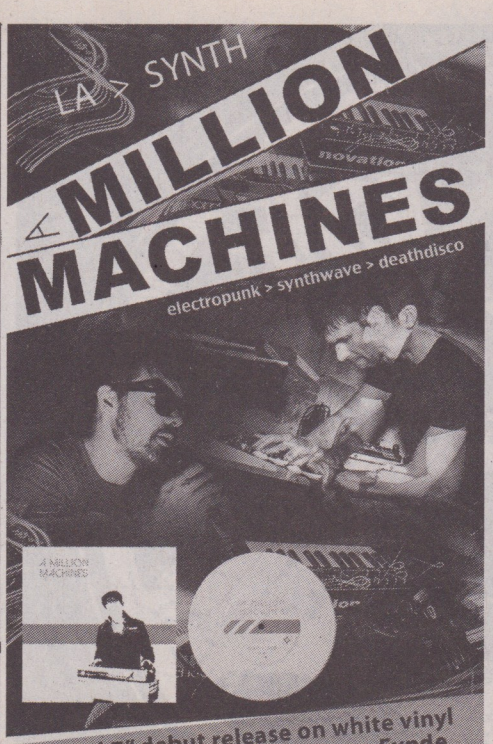

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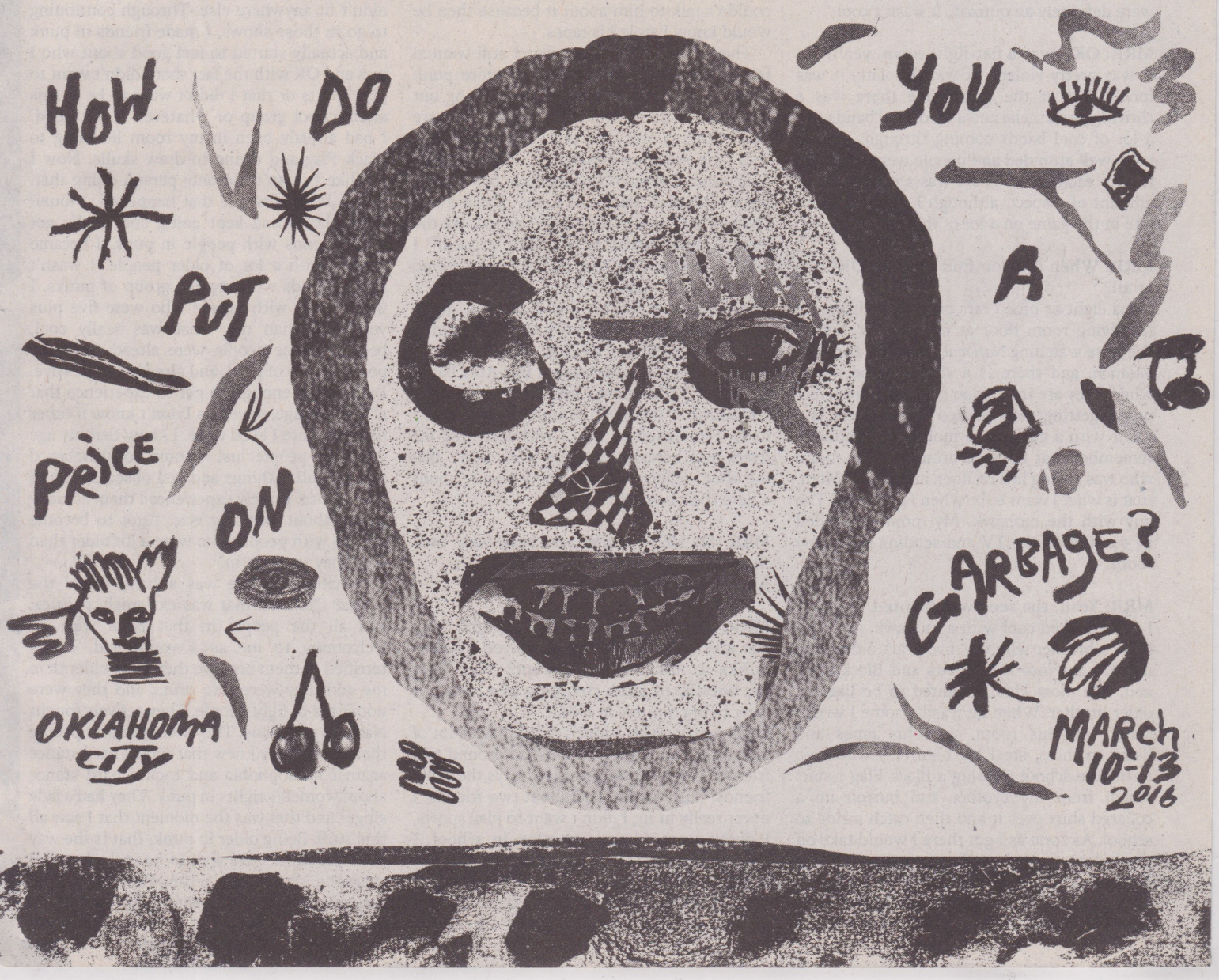
EVERYTHING IS NOT OK VOLUME 2

"If you want to throw a fest, accept failure and hope for success."

I met Roz Adams through my partner at Chaos in Tejas a bunch of years ago, and it was love at first mosh. I know that sounds fucking awful and stupid, but when we were introduced, we immediately got into this amazing conversation about punk, art, work, life, and probably some other stuff. Then our conversation had to pause while Roz put in a mouth guard and I tightened the laces on my Vans. One of those punching hardcore bands was about to start playing and we felt like punching. I came away from the experience wondering about this guy. I knew that he was from somewhere in the middle of the country, was big, and carried a mouth guard. Was he nothing more than some corn-fed goon that I could file in my personal catalog of people to call if I was about to get jumped? I spent the rest of that fest and subsequent ones trying to figure that out. My conclusion? Yes, I would call him if I was about to get jumped. But that never happens anymore. So instead I call him to pick his brain about the awesome shit he does and is into. He's got this band called American Hate. He co-ran an art gallery called Tall Hill Creative. He does this fest called Everything is Not OK. Roz is one of my favorite people in the world. You should meet him.

Interview and introduction by Boo Boo Danger.
Photos provided by Garett Fisbeck, art by Olivia Gibb.



MRR: What was Oklahoma City like when you were growing up?
It was pretty desolate. I grew up in a suburb that was predominantly middle class and upper middle class but still not very developed at the time. Now it is a thriving place for rich white people. Really, it's just a rich suburb with a heavy police presence, but when I was growing up it wasn't quite there yet. But, that's what they wanted it to be, so they did it.

OKC itself was pretty vacant. Our downtown was like a ghost town. There wasn't a lot of money in the city, but there was a really big punk scene from the suburbs north of the city all the way to the south of the city...you know, the whole place. There were punks everywhere.

MRR: Do you remember having ideas about these people, or were punks just part of your landscape when you were a little kid?
People who looked punk or could be punk were definitely looked down upon. It wasn't accepted. If you had weird colored hair and you were in public, you would get yelled at and people would try to fight you. That was just the way it was wherever you went. You were definitely an outcast. It wasn't cool

MRR: OKC was a fist-fight town, yeah?
It was pretty violent. It was desolate, it was lonely, but at the same time there was a thriving punk scene and a lot of cool bands and a lot of cool bands coming through,. Shows were well attended and people were generally nice to each other. There was a pretty decent amount of respect, although I think we were late in the game on a lot of things.

MRR: When did you find punk in OKC, or at all?
I was eight or nine years old. I was sitting on the living room floor at my parents' house. We were watching *National Lampoon's European Vacation*, and there is a scene in the movie where they are in London and there are street punks getting their photos taken. There is a scene with a guy with a mohawk. I distinctly remember that I turned around to my mom, who was sitting in a recliner, and I said "Mom, that is what I want to be when I grow up." The guy with the mohawk. My mom responded by turning off the TV and sending me to my room.

MRR: Yeah, the seed was planted.
I never looked cool with a mohawk, just FYI. I had a brother who was five years older than me. He got into the Misfits and Black Flag, and, like most kids, I wanted to be like my older brother. When he wasn't home I would sneak into his room, grab his tapes and listen to them, steal his t-shirts. I would go to middle school wearing a Black Flag t-shirt stolen from my brother and button up a collared shirt over it and then catch a ride to school. As soon as I got there I would take off the button-up and stuff it in my locker like everything was cool. For a long time I didn't know what was happening, but at the same time I was interested in punk. I knew about Black Flag and the Exploited and the Circle Jerks. I was really, really into the Sex Pistols. Let's just make that public knowledge...I was a huge fan of the Sex Pistols. I thought that was what punk was. I just had no idea.

Where I went to school, there was a group of kids who were all skateboarders and punks. From what I could understand at the time, they had all been friends for a really long time. I showed up in a Black Flag t-shirt I stole from my brother, and they were kind of like, "Who is this kid?" As kids are, they were pretty mean to me. But whatever, I got over it. They didn't accept me. They called me a poser, whatever. I was like, whatever, I don't care. But those kids knew about stuff that was going on. They were into Blatz and Filth and knew about all these bands that were more recent or active at the time. I didn't know anything about it, I thought punk was dead.

Those same kids pranked me by being like "Hey, are you going to go see the Dead Kennedys tonight?" and I was like "Whoa, cool, where are they playing?" and they were like "Poseur, they broke up a long time ago." What did I know? There was no Internet yet. I lived in Oklahoma—I didn't know anything. I was stealing tapes from my brother, and I couldn't talk to him about it because then he would know I stole his tapes.

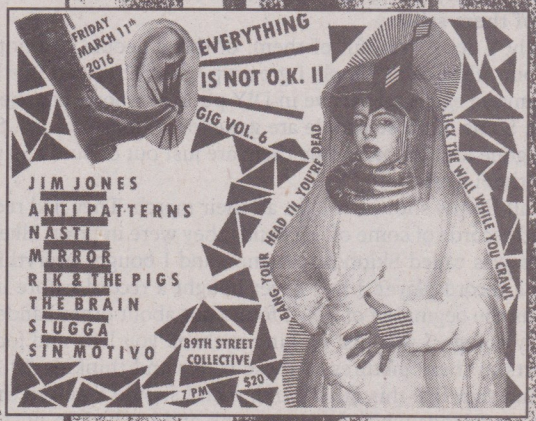
They were mean to me, but I still wanted to be their friends because they wore punk shirts to school too. I ended up hanging out with one of them, and he was like, "You are not as bad as everyone said. You are kind of cool." He ended up making me a mixtape. The only bands I remember distinctly being on it were Filth and Blatz and I was blown away. "Now what's this? This doesn't sound like the punk I know. And this band just existed?" I was freaked out by that and started seeking it out. I don't know when I realized that it was actually going on and had been going on, that where I lived shows were happening and I didn't know. The first show I went to was Half Empty, which was a Bay Area band. That was the moment I was like, "Yeah!" and realized that there were punk bands where I lived. From then on out, I was searching for flyers and harassing people who didn't like me about where the next show was or about where their band was playing.

MRR: So 1994, maybe you have your own Black Flag shirts by then?
Nah, still stealing them.

MRR: But by then you are a punk. Was the way you were being perceived by non-punks around OKC different? Was your life outside of punk changing as a result of now being a punk in OKC?
I was pretty much a loner, didn't have a lot of friends growing up. I usually had around two friends. Not even necessarily always the same friends, but I always had about two friends. I never really fit in, I didn't want to play sports, I didn't want to pay attention in school. I don't know what that says about me. I wasn't invested in the school I went to. I wasn't invested in sports or all these extracurricular activities. Being young, I would stay home and I would draw and I would feel alone, like I didn't fit in anywhere. I went to that show, and it wasn't that I was suddenly accepted by people, but internally that's when I felt like I was somewhere where I belonged. I didn't make a bunch of friends that night, or, like, it wasn't this external revolution in my life... it was like I knew these people didn't fit in anywhere else, too. I wasn't turned away, the people that ran the show and lived at the house the show was at welcomed me in. I paid my $5, I got to watch the bands. Seeing those bands play, experiencing that for the first time, I felt like I belonged somewhere. I don't think I had felt that yet in a social setting.

I had always been the outcast of wherever I was. My parents forced me to play sports when I was young, and I was really bad at it. So no one liked me on the teams that I was on because I was the kid who made us lose games. My parents would take me to church and stuff and when there would be a youth activity I was the kid who would hang out alone and eat all the cookies, so nobody liked me. Like, whatever it was, I was doing my own thing, and I didn't fit in with people. Then I went to that show, and I was like, "I feel OK about myself." I felt like I was around a bunch of people who didn't fit anywhere else. Through continuing to go to those shows, I made friends in punk and actually started to feel good about who I was and OK with the fact that I didn't want to play sports or that I didn't want to be in this after school group or whatever. It felt good. I had already been in my room listening to Black Flag and trying to draw skulls. Now I felt like I wasn't the only person doing that. That's kind of where that happened. I found more shows and kept going and finally got to be friends with people in punk. I became friends with a lot of older people. I wasn't really friends with my age group of punks. I was friends with people who were five plus years old than me. That was really cool, because those people were already into the political side of punk and already progressive. I was lucky enough to get to experience that at a young age, where as I don't know if other people where I lived were. I know that my age group of people just wanted to skateboard and vandalize things and yell obscenities and slam dance. I rarely experienced them actually caring about anything else. I got to become friends with people who were a lot older than me. They took me in.

Specifically, there was a band called the Boxcar Children that was extremely political and all the people in that band were so welcoming to me as a young kid. I was terrified of them because they were older than me and they were into drugs and they were not afraid to fight people. They actively fought Nazis in our scene. They were the first people that I personally knew that took a hard stance against homophobia and took a hard stance about women's rights in punk. They had a lady singer and that was the moment that I saw all this stuff. Being older in punk, that is the way stuff should be. We should be inclusive, and everyone should see representation of who they are in this. That's what punk is—we are all outcasts. It shouldn't be a boys club or a



SELECTED FLYERS FROM EINOK 2
ARTISTS CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
TYLER ADAMS, BOO BOO DANGER, ASHLEY HOHMAN, LAURA PALLMALL, JOSH FEIGERT, GRACE AMBROSE

cool kids club. I guess what I am trying to say is my introduction to punk and to punks was that it was a boys club and a cool kids club. I met all these punks who already knew each other and I was some kid who came to school in a Black Flag t-shirt. Whether they were just putting up a defense mechanism because maybe they were worried I was cooler than them or they didn't think I was cool at all, I don't know. I definitely wasn't cooler than them

MRR: I think there was also more of a defensiveness over punk pre-1994, before the Offspring and Green Day were on TV or the Sex Pistols got back together.

It was this thing that was very special to you, and if you knew about it you were wary of people because it was all you had. I genuinely felt that, and I see it goes both ways. I would see a person out in public that was close to my age and had a punk t-shirt on and I would immediately, and without even thinking about it, think of one of two things: "That's a poseur" or "I want to meet that person right now."

I got to hang out with that band the Boxcar Children, specifically, and they were cool to me. I was the only kid my age hanging out with them at the time. It's not like they would guide me, they would just let me hang out with them. I watched them do things that I thought were really scary but not scary enough to make me leave. I was still interested and in love with this stuff. But I was also a sheltered white kid from the suburbs, and I was afraid of what was happening. The first time I was in an apartment and I saw someone shoot heroin into their veins with a syringe, I was terrified: I was very scared of what was happening. I was afraid I was going to become a junkie from just being in the room. At the same time, I was hanging out with these older kids who were not all doing drugs or whatever, but it was my introduction into seeing people actively use drugs and being violent, but justifiably so, I think. They weren't picking fights with people. They were kind of defending themselves and other people who were being attacked. But they never pushed any of that stuff on me. They never tried to get me to do drugs, they didn't try to get me to drink, they didn't try to get me to join in these fights with them. They just let me hang out and be myself, so it was really cool because I got to feel accepted for who I was with people who were also into punk. I got to learn about bands and not feel alone.

MRR: That's pretty powerful. That is pretty important. Do you know any of them still?

Yeah, actually, I do. A handful of them, of those people and not just that band, but other older people I grew up with. They still live here. None of them are extremely active in DIY punk anymore, but they are all still cool. Some of those people are gone for various reasons. Some of them are gone for real, and some them are just out of punk. So yeah, I still know them, yeah.

At that Half Empty show, I bought all their merch. They had records and they had records of some of the bands they were in prior. Like, one of the bands was called Skinhead Magnet, and I bought everything. I didn't have a record player. I had never bought a record before in my life. That was the beginning of how I found out about other bands that were actively going—I was just looking at thank you lists and looking at the t-shirts in these pictures of these bands and thinking "If I like this band, and they like this other band, then I should listen to them." I started to get friends who were into punk and we had an unspoken contest here to see who could find bands first, because there was no iInternet and we lived in Oklahoma. Bands came here frequently, but not every band.

There was a record store here called Music Dimension. It was on the south side of the city. I remember the day I found out it existed. I was just buying records from bands when I saw them and that was pretty much the extent of my exposure. If I saw a band, I bought their record. If they had a distro, I would buy more. There was a guy here who ran a distro at shows, so I would buy records from that guy. I remember when I was seventeen or so, I found out there was a record store and it was on the south side of OKC and I lived in a suburb north of OKC. Here in Oklahoma, we do distance in time, so it's about thirty minutes away from me. I had no idea it existed. The guy who ran the store was really knowledgeable and had been involved in punk since the early '80s. He bought into the store, it had already been a record store, this guy came along and joined up and took half ownership with his own collection, so it was full of all this crazy stuff. I started finding stuff through him, he would recommend bands to me and let me buy records. That is where I bought my first *Maximum Rocknroll*. At the time, *MRR* had a classified section. Do you remember this?

MRR: Yes, very well.

The first however many issues I bought, the back couple of pages were classifieds. There were people who wanted to do tape trades and trade records. Specifically, the first time I ever did this, there was a guy in Michigan, and he had just posted a list of records he wanted, and he was willing to trade. One of the records that he wanted was the Bastard LP, and I had the Bastard LP, and I was a teenager, so I was totally willing to let it go.

MRR: Ah, kids are so dumb.

But, at the same time, I am so glad I did it. I wrote to him and was like "Hey, I have this record, I see that you want it, and I will trade it to you." I didn't even know about the value of records, I didn't even know what I wanted. He was like, "OK, here is what I got,'" and I was like "I don't know, let's just trade. I will send it to you, I trust you, I found your name in the back of *MRR*." So I send this guy the Bastard LP and in turn he sends me this Finish comp called *The Vikings are Coming*. Suddenly, I knew there was punk in Finland. It's like, *boom*, wow, there is punk everywhere. That guy, his name was Jamie, we became pen pals for five or six years. He would send me records and I would send him records.

I remember one of the best days: His Hero Is Gone did a tour with Uranus and they did a split LP that was very limited. They played where he lived and came nowhere near where I lived. I came home from school one day and had a package with the His Hero Is Gone/ Uranus split LP and a cool His Hero Is Gone patch that I still have sewed onto a hat. We never met, but we stayed in touch for a really long time and just sent each other gifts. That was a really cool thing, and that was what got me really into this magazine. I got to make all these friends through these classified ads. "There's a punk that wants a friend? Cool. Me too."

MRR: You just sent some well-concealed cash in an envelope and hoped for the best.

Yeah. I seriously sent so much cash to people. I very rarely didn't get records in return. I paid so much attention to what was going on, because I really wanted be in touch with the greater punk community.

I went from thinking it died in the '80s, like there were ten punk bands ever and they were all from America except the Sex Pistols and the Exploited. "I have to listen to this one Circle Jerks tape for the rest of my life." That's it. Punk stopped. Then when I realized it was still happening everywhere, I wanted to be everywhere.

MRR: When I've talked with you about OKC in the '90s, you've said there were a ton of punks. And then the punk bubble burst in a lot of the country at the end of the '90s and beginning of the '00s. So while you're discovering there's all this punk going on in the world, and you're connecting with it, your local scene kind of deflated.

To an extent. That's the age where people had moved on or gone off to college. Or gotten too deep into drugs. Punk for some people is a passing phase, like a youth culture. But I can't say there wasn't punk going on, because it could have just been under my radar. I got caught up with my own age group. Then the people who were doing shows and were active in the DIY community stopped or moved away. At that point in my life I wasn't looking to younger generations. I had always been friends with people who were older than me, and when they stopped, I didn't know how to look in the other direction. I remember in like 2005 or so, I randomly came upon this flyer for a show that was happening in the city and was like, "What's this? I've felt this before." It was weird, because I had been playing in bands and putting on shows and helped run a DIY space. I felt like I was connected. I came across this flyer and I had no idea what the space was or what the local bands were or anything. So, like, when I was younger, I went. There were all these kids there, and I was old! Some of those kids became really good friends of mine and some of them are still around. That was the point I realized my generation wasn't the end of it. First I thought it ended before me. Then I thought it ended with my generation. That was the slap in the face: Punk's gonna happen whether you're paying attention or not. That was so refreshing and got me so excited again.

MRR: So at that point you reinvested yourself?

Yeah. You get comfortable in your scene, locally or globally. You meet so many people doing so many interesting things. Just paying attention to everything they're doing and everything you're doing takes up all your time. You forget that every year someone is stealing a Black Flag t-shirt from their sibling and hiding it under a button-up and wearing it to school. Or some kid finds a Sex Pistols... mp3.

MRR: Just finds an mp3 lying on the ground.

Yeah, and they just plug it into their iPad or whatever.

MRR: Now I want to talk about your art. Are you one of these people who always "arted"? One of those kids who was drawing all the time?

Yeah, hold on... *[Ross reaches off screen and holds up a framed, crude drawing rendered in red magic marker. There's, like, three standing muppet-looking figures and a flying fish with teeth. One of the figures definitely has a mohawk of liberty spikes. Across the top of the piece is written "To: my love, From: the one that you love]*

This is something that I drew for my grandma when I was six years old. That's the oldest piece I still have, and I only have it because my grandma saved it forever and ever, and when she passed, I found it in her stuff. She was a painter and was really into painting. She didn't do it professionally, but she did it because she loved to do it. She had a studio room in her house. I spent a lot of my time in there. She had a large part in raising me, so I was introduced to that when I was really young.

I was close to my grandma until she passed away in my late 20s. She was such a radical lady. She taught me a lot of cool stuff. She taught me to believe in myself and to do what I wanted and to live for the day and to not judge people based on what they looked like but to get to know them instead. She pushed that creative side of me really hard. She let me dig through her paints and make big messes and ruin her beautiful paintings and never got upset about it. She would give me sketchbooks and pencils, and I would go to her house and draw for hours and hours, and I would go home and keep drawing. It made me feel like I was doing something, but it was also a release. I was a kid without many friends and had low self-esteem and wasn't confident in most circumstances. "I'll stay in the back and I'll keep my mouth shut." That's what I felt like. I don't know where in my life that came from, but when I was drawing, I felt like I was in my world. Or I was creating my world, and everything was OK there. It didn't matter what I was drawing. It was like I was talking to myself. I saw it in my mind; I put it on the paper.

After that time, though, what kept me into drawing and got me more into it was punk. Seeing these cool record covers like the Black Flag covers that Ray Pettibon did, or Pushead's art. I'd se this stuff and be like, "Woah! I wanna draw that." And I can't. I still can't, but I'm trying. Are you out there, Ray Pettibon? I'm still trying to rip you off. I would see album covers and t-shirt, and skateboard decks or whatever, and I was so into it. So I started drawing flyers. My buddy Erik and I would make flyers for shows that we didn't book and that no one had asked us to flyer for. I don't know what Erik's dad did, but he had a copy machine at home. So we'd make flyers and copy them there. Also the '90s was great for scamming Kinko's. If you were in punk in the '90s, you knew about scamming Kinko's.

MRR: It was so ubiquitous that it didn't even feel like scamming.

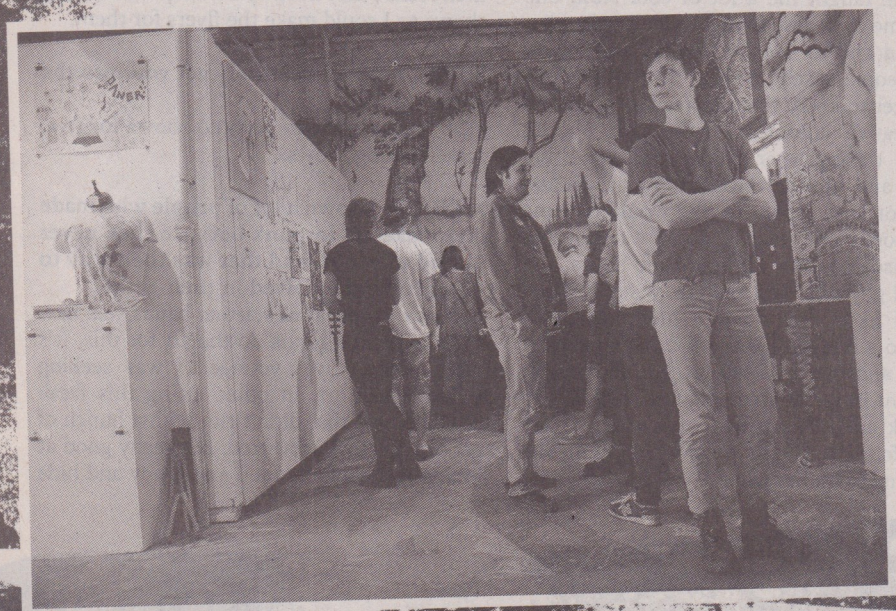
Exactly. There was a guy that worked the late shift at Kinko's by my house, and he let us do whatever we wanted. I had band practice in there once. Midnight or one in the morning, we just showed up with our gear, and he was like, "Cool, yeah, whatever, I don't care." So anyway, we would make flyers for shows, and that was our way to try to get into the shows for free or for, like, less money. "We made all these flyers!" "But we didn't ask you to." I don't know how it works for other people but maybe for them they start booking shows and then realize they need flyers. I started booking shows so I could make the flyers for them.

MRR: That will definitely get you into the show for free.

Yeah, if you want to get into shows for free, start booking shows.

MRR: I've known a lot of people who made and make art in punk because they never played in bands, and that was their way to be active and involved in their scene.

Part of the appeal of starting bands was like, "I know who's gonna do the art for this. It's me." When I was younger, I was seeking validation in art, in punk. Being this freak in Oklahoma that didn't run with a bunch of people. Really introverted, but really good at hiding it. I could be loud and funny and hide



all the sadness until I was alone. I just wanted someone to just be like, "Hey, will you do our record cover?" I just wanted someone to want my art. Know what I mean? But I also didn't want to put that out there. I didn't want to let anyone know that I wanted them to want my art.

MRR: It's like somehow we have this idea that Pushead was just sitting in his room drawing and, like, the FU's knocked on his door and were like, "Hey, you wanna do *Kill for Christ*?"

Yeah, exactly. In my mind, that was just how it worked. Like, everyone just knew "There's the artist." I allowed myself to feel left out, I think. And while you can genuinely feel left out in punk, the DIY punk community is a platform where you don't have to do that. You can step in, start a band and make flyers and book shows and make zines. That's the beauty of it. I spent a lot of time feeling left out, and then I realized I didn't have to wait for someone to ask me. I was like, "I'll start a band. I'll draw this t-shirt, I'll make these flyers. I want to do this." Then someone finally did ask me do an art show, and I didn't want to do it. Ha. I think some of the art I do is cool. That's mostly why I do it. I like to draw, and I like to look at my drawings. Maybe that's egotistical, and maybe that's the kid that was alone in his room drawing his whole life and feeling comfort in that.

MRR: OK, so we've talked about Oklahoma, we've talked about punk, and we've talked about art. Now let's talk about how you bring them all together for Everything is Not OK. Go.

Ok, this is how it came about. I play in this band called American Hate, and we were touring a lot. I love being on the road. I feel really free, and I don't have to worry about things, because you can't. You don't know if you're going to get paid or where you're going to sleep. I'm lucky enough to be in a band with people who care about what they're doing, and I think that showed, and people got interested in what we, as a band, were doing. That is very special to me. So we got to do all this really cool stuff and meet all these really cool people, and I was riding this high of "Punk rules, fuck yeah." Then our guitar player got the opportunity to go to Germany for a research project after he graduated college. We were all really excited for him, but I'm like, "Well, now

what do I do? I'm a punk singer. I have no musical talent. I'm that fucking guy taking up all the space that's always been a singer." The other members of the band are great musicians and beautiful people, so they were able to start new awesome bands. There I was again, kind of feeling lost, knowing I had a year without this band. I had become so accustomed to seeing all these cool bands and people around the country and wanted to figure out a way to keep it going. So I had this great idea: Let's have a fest in Oklahoma City. If I can't go see all my friends, I'm going to get them to come see me. All on the same weekend.

I also had this gallery I was a part of at the time, and I knew there were all these people in punk making really cool art. Maybe I can't get any bands excited to come out and play OKC, but maybe I can get some artists excited to come hang their art in a gallery. So I started with artists, and that's been the heart of the fest. So I'm asking these artists to be in the art show, and some of them are in bands I really like, so if I convince the artists to come, I can probably convince their bands to come. At the time, too, OKC was becoming an exciting spot for shows. I wanted to share the great feelings I was getting from touring. I wanted to bring it here and show younger kids here there's a world out there. Go on tour, make art. Nothing else matters. I was terrified about putting it on, but I thought, if I invite my friends to come play, and no money gets made so I can't pay them…how mad can they be? Ha. Right? We're friends! If I get all these great people together, the worst-case scenario is we all spent a great weekend together.

Then I reached further and asked, like, Sugi, which was terrifying to me, and all this bad stuff happened with that, but now I have a friend in Japan whose art I've looked up to since I was a kid. *[Editor's note: Sugi is a legendary punk artist from Japan. After a bunch of email exchanges, he had agreed to loan several large original pieces to the fest last year, and all of them were lost in shipping. This was by far the greatest tragedy to strike the fest. Ross was able to compensate Sugi out-of-pocket.]*

I had just made all these personal revelations about art, and I wanted to share that, too. You don't have to make a bunch of money off your art. You don't even need to sell it if you don't want to. Or you can. Punks can sell their art outside of punk. Some shitty boss somewhere might see some punk kid's art somewhere and end up paying their rent. I also didn't do the fest on my own. There were enough radical people here who wanted to help. Like Tim, Lenora. Lots of people. And it worked. I think some people got excited about new art and seeing bands that were new to them. No one was really an asshole—at least not that I saw or heard about. Certainly not enough to ruin the weekend. I never had the idea that it would be ongoing. Originally it was meant to be a one-time thing.

MRR: So what's your excuse for doing it again?
It got such a positive response. It was so fun. I used to go to Chaos in Tejas every year, because it was close, and I got to see incredible bands and make new friends. But that's gone, and now all the fests are across the country from me. I'm terrified of flying, and I don't like driving, so *what do I do?* I needed that feeling of seeing my friends and being OK. In day-to-day life, we have to go to work and deal with people in public that don't agree with us and don't like us. They don't want us in their society. We are outcasts. I have felt that for a long time, and I know there are people who feel that so much more than me. It sucks that there are so many people that feel it so much more than me. I'm a white man, and I can go out and not have to worry about certain things that other people do. For me, there are these times where those bad feelings of mine are all gone, and I feel like I belong somewhere. Chaos did that for me. Prank Fest in the '90s…So I want to do that for myself and other people.

After last year I had people getting in contact with me. Artists and bands got in touch and said, "If you're doing this again, I want to be a part of your fest." So first we had some people wanting to come to Oklahoma. Now we had people wanting to come *back*. I don't think that's an opportunity we want to pass up on in punk, ya know? Haha. I mean, I don't know how many bands you know from Oklahoma.

MRR: Uh, I know this awesome band called American Hate and this pretty good band called Leech.
Exactly. And that's how it's always been. I would go on tour and people would know Brother Inferior and NOTA, and that's great. Those bands are great. But I knew about 30 other bands from OK that no one had ever heard of. So I also wanted people to come here and see some of the great bands here.

I also want to get people excited on punk again, because sometimes you get into that lull and you get stuck looking in one direction for too long, and you forget to look the other way, but then you do and you find what you're looking for. You're reminded that it's gonna happen with or without you, so…I dunno… it's cool. When I die, punk doesn't die, and that's super tight. That's cool, because I couldn't handle that pressure. If punk's not going to stop, and art's not going to stop, then why should I?

MRR: Fuck yes. Let's end the interview there. Is there anything else you want to add?
The interviewer is handsome. I'd like to see that in print. I'd like to thank *MRR* for providing me with a handsome interviewer. And if you'd like to go someplace you'd never go to for any other reason, we're here in Oklahoma, and we're having a punk fest. Punk is tight 2016.

Everything Is Not OK II took place in Oklahoma City from March 10th to 13th, 2016. See the next issue of MRR *for photos from the fest.*

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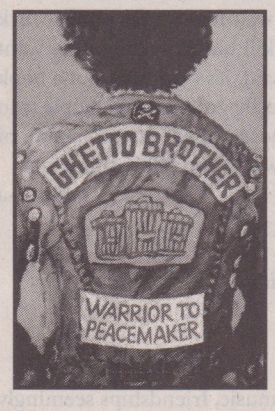


Ghetto Brother: Warrior To Peacemaker
Julian Voloj and Claudia Aherling
NBM/ComicsLit
$12.99 | 128 pgs

In the early '70s, the Ghetto Brothers (at over 2,000 members) were the largest street gang in the Bronx, making up a whopping fifth of the 10,000 gang members active in the borough. The Bronx was fractured and hurt, suffering from governmental indifference, resegregation, and white flight that fed into conditions of poverty, addiction, and violence. Sam McPheeters wrote that ridiculously long article about Apocalyptic New York in the public imagination a few years ago, touching on filmic representations of the city in popular culture. Make no mistake, the Bronx of the Ghetto Brothers is the same city that inspired *Escape From New York* and where the story and spirit of *The Warriors* owes its heart. It is the city that respectable whites and politicians of the time would have not lost sleep over sealing off from the rest of society, blowing up all the bridges, mining the waters, and leaving as a purgatory hellscape for undesirables: addicts, sex workers, Blacks, Puerto Ricans, and gangsters.

The rift between Puerto Ricans and Black Americans was harsh (nevermind internalized Latinx anti-Blackness, but that's another story), and as they were ghettoized into the same neighborhoods, conflicts along racial lines grew. Kids and young adults, with not many resources to turn to, formed gangs to protect themselves and their block from others doing the same. The late '60s and early '70s in the Bronx were desperate, tense, and dangerous.

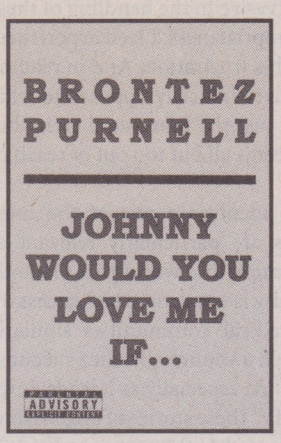
This is the climate in which "Yellow" Benjy Melendez came of age, founding the Ghetto Brothers gang as a family, as a means of protection as well as pride. Thanks to a meeting with Black Panther Party member Joseph Mpa, Melendez realized that black and brown kids killing each other in the streets had to stop. He wanted to unite the gangs in the Bronx to work together and fight their common enemies, namely the police, the politicians who controlled those police, and the capitalism that (still) drives it all.

Thanks to the truce that was drawn up at the historic Hoe Avenue Peace Meeting in 1971, as well as the Ghetto Brothers-hosted weekly street and warehouse parties, the inter-gang violence faded, and cliques turned into B-Boy crews, warlords into DJs, and bangers into rappers and graffiti artists. Melendez himself turned the Ghetto Brothers into the Nuyorican soul-funk band of the same name whose LP *Power/Fuerza*, an eight-track powerhouse of Afro-Caribbean rhythms and melody, was recently reissued on Truth and Soul Records. The gangs worked together, dovetailing with the recently founded New York chapter of the Young Lords, to feed and protect their neighborhoods, providing services for tenants' rights, bilingual education, and more.

Ghetto Brother is essentially a memoir, and Voloj masterfully weaves Melendez's personal story (including his discovery and reclamation of his family's crypto-Jewish roots) and history with that of Bronx gang life and the eventual birth of hip-hop culture. Claudia Aherling's faces in black and white watercolor are startlingly detailed, not only capturing the pain and desperation that Benjy, his friends, and family find themselves in, but also the hope, the possibility, and potential contained in each. She balances abstraction and realism in perfect harmony, whether it be buildings, background, or characters, communicating the ugly beauty of the Bronx at the time. It honestly reminds me of Eastman and Laird's early work on *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* in the '80s, which draws so much of its inspiration from the bombed out city and gang-scapes of the Ghetto Brothers' reality.

This book is a small piece of a much larger puzzle just recently being put together, telling the origins of not only hip-hop culture but of resistance, struggle, and survival, a story from which many who are holding this very magazine might learn a lot.

—Sean Nieves-Quiñones



Johnny, Would You Love Me If My Dick Was Bigger
Brontez Purnell
Rudos and Rubes
$11.95 | 126 pgs

When I was fifteen, I went to see Gravy Train!!!! play at a small shitty venue in Miami while my dad waited for me in the parking lot. His presence there was obviously mortifying, but by the time the show was through, I was at least thankful my father spent its duration outside. This was partially due to the performance of Brontez Purnell, one of the band's members and their self-proclaimed hype man. The root of my embarrassment stemmed from the fact that he spent the entire performance moving maniacally and flamboyantly, dripping with sweat in only his tighty whiteys. As someone whose self professed "ultimate goal" was to "kill that wide eyed 'people just standing there' era of indie rock that [he] felt had gone on long enough," Brontez's spastic and incredible motions on stage did just that, and despite my braces-clad mouth and awkward, rhythmically challenged limbs, I was also moving in a dad-free zone of total freedom.

To my teenage eyes, I had seemingly witnessed *all* of Brontez, maybe even too much. Fast-forward almost ten years to when I am proven 100% wrong through the discovery that there is absolutely never "too much" when it comes to Purnell. His beautiful and gruesome new book, *Johnny, Would You Love Me If My Dick Were Bigger?*, begins with a vignette of the same name where we dive right into a world where TMI gratuitously doesn't exist. In this first fun snippet of his life, the author gets high in a parking lot and has unprotected sex with a guy who "looks like he's tried every drug ever offered to him," who shoots up and suggests he and Brontez have a threesome with his female roommate because she's "chubby." This isn't what scandalizes Brontez (who we learn is so rarely scandalized)—it's the fact that the junkie suggests being boyfriends after, which prompts him to run out of the apartment completely naked.

This candid diary of sorts continues as a series of zine entries, poems, vignettes, writing class assignments, and more, somewhat randomly

strung together without any real order or timeline. It spans years of tours, dates, dance performances, therapy sessions, school, parties, etc., from Alabama to Oakland and everywhere in between. This may sound hard to follow (and at times it is), but the style works for him and overall the book is impossible not to like. In fact, it's one of the most likeable books I have ever read, and I barely even like reading! It's thanks to Brontez's laugh out loud and uniquely raw narration that *Johnny* feels cohesive. He gracefully shares the heartbreaking and hilarious details of his life, regardless of a conventional narrative style or reverence for how things *should* be done.

Total disregard for what is considered appropriate is indeed a large part of what makes the book so exceedingly funny, but only because it does so while remaining simultaneously deadly serious and critical. It's a delicate balance, and Brontez's self-awareness is one of the book's most prized assets. He writes that "humor should never negate the seriousness of what you're talking about," and *Johnny* is brimming with dark, difficult, and real subject matter.

By the book's second paragraph, we have also come to learn that the author has a lust to kill, and it's not too hard to quickly understand why, considering the cards stacked against him. Brontez is a poor, gay, black, perpetually single punk waiter with HIV and a small dick who doesn't fit in with a city of predominantly rich, boring, white couples. He also adds that he was "molested as a child" and hints that he has a substance abuse problem or perhaps a few. However, he never paints himself as a victim, he simply tells it as it is without censorship or pretention. He uses humor and frankness to overcome the sterility pervasive in the handling of these identities as seen through academia or appropriateness. Lived experiences trump heavily theorized jargon to express his frustration. And in reading this book, the reader can also find themselves radically opposed to what opposes him. He forces us to witness not just the injustice therein, but also the underlying absurdity in it which seems all but too out of reach or unworthy of examination for academia.

Brontez's layered navigation of sexual identity is one of the most important of these identities. His words are particularly relevant as the voice of someone who is decidedly femme in a world that blatantly privileges masculinity. Outspoken femininity is a welcome and necessary perspective considering how so-called radical communities similarly prize butchness. And it's devastating to watch a younger Brontez succumb to the pressures of such male centered culture, especially as it leads down the path of unprotected sex and eventual HIV. These stories of bugchasing, barebackers, anonymous sex, STD clinics, and bathhouses are jarring, but nevertheless such candid insight is a crucial perspective and must be read.

Indeed, Brontez doesn't care that he can make readers uncomfortable. In fact, he thrives in it. He knows that his tawdry, slutty, visceral realness is not really what the world wants to hear now that #lovewins. And the majority of *Johnny's* stories do take place against the backdrop of a city that has succumbed to the allure of homonormativity and tech jobs, state sanctioned marriage, babies, and money. His writing class at night school perfectly illustrates Brontez's clash with normative society. In my favorite vignette, he acknowledges that that he was bumming out his classmates with all his "AIDS jokes and post apocalyptic bullshit." Their critique of his writing? "It's always so heavy. Like *soooo* heavy. Maybe you should just find a boyfriend and write about that..." Following this response, the same class goes on to give a standing ovation to a dude who knew someone who died of AIDS once. "Once."

The obliviousness of his peers is a telling example of Brontez's lack of mainstream success or appreciation. Unsurprising, of course, considering the dismal state of both gay and straight society. Obviously they would prefer the more agreeable words of his ex the writer, author of, "the *Incredible Adventures of Two Boring Ass White Dudes in Love*." Yet even so, by page ten, Purnell also confesses that, "despite everything [he] knew about the world around [him], [he] still had a genuine love for humankind." Admittedly, he isn't sure how, but feels lucky to do so. In a sense, the book is spent grappling with these conflicting impulses. Brontez actively decides to ignore the haters and keep fighting by continuing to make art uncompromisingly. He does so in order to try to communicate himself literally and without censorship or apology. He plays music, makes dance performances, writes zines, and more, seemingly in search of people along the way who finally do "get" it. It's the diary of someone who has both given up on society yet is still ultimately searching for love and acceptance.

If these contradictions resonate with you, then you might also find solace in this book. *Johnny* belongs to those who don't fit in—outsiders in their own supposed communities, gay weirdos, actual punks, fuck ups, pervs, and freaks. Those who want to kill but simultaneously want to live, laugh, love, so to speak. That being said, it's obviously not a book for yuppies, prudes, techies, those who are easily grossed out, people who care about recycling or a linear narrative, those against the profession of "jizz mopping," and uptight losers, so stay away if you fall in this camp.

—jolie m-a

Ready Fire Aim
Kevin Triggs
598 pgs

Finding new music, friendships seemingly stronger than family, love, and culture as a young teenager is something we can all relate to. Heck, even skinheads have a coming of age story! This is the slightly fictionalized story of George Dachs, a sixteen-year-old kid growing up in Milwaukee during the early '90s. George is fatherless, sexually abused, and living with a single mom severely affected with depression. With a love of violence, a background in wrestling, and a strong need to find his place, George slowly becomes a junior member of Brew City Skins, a group of young anti-Nazis hell bent on preserving the skinhead way of life. You know, being working class, fighting, drinking beer, and the smooth mellow sounds of ska.

George has had an unbelievable fucking childhood. In elementary school, he was the only kid that would stand up to the school bully, breaking the nose of the offender who was tormenting a young Russian Jewish girl (earning him the free services of a Russian Mafia lawyer for life), later bartending Black Panther BBQs and apparently dealing great weed to the entire town. His insane backstory enables him to rise in the ranks of his skinhead crew, unite several militant ethnic groups from all over the city, beat the hell out of racists, avoid police interference (for the most part), and fall in love with a senior ranking skin's main squeeze!

I have this fear that some braindead rude boy is going to bust my aging kneecaps for this, but the plight of the skinhead is not one that I am keen on. Non-racist or not, I don't really give a fuck about beer swigging goons beating the fuck out of people who don't have their same ideals. I sincerely believe that if I were to send a slightly fictitious autobiography about me scamming the U.S. government out of money, avoiding work, avoiding confrontation, not showering, and playing my folky guitar to some serious skinhead magazine, it would get similar disrespect. There is, however, a great game you can play if you read this book. Playing a song on the internet as the author mentions, it really helped me deal with this read. The soundtrack is pretty varied, and despite my feelings about this book, pretty fucking good! Great first wave ska, some later two-tone stuff, late '80s hip-hop, street punk, and even Oi!

—Rymodee

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

Senseless violence is so hard to understand. Especially for someone who has no desire to do it. Likewise, abuse of authority baffles me. I definitely have a problem with authority. I think everyone should be allowed to do what they want as long as it doesn't harm anyone else. I don't want anyone telling me what to do, and I don't want to tell anyone else what to do. It seems sensible, but of course it is never that easy.

Arresting Power chronicles Portland, OR's history of police violence. If you buy into the reputation of Portland as a liberal utopia, you will be as surprised as I was that the same problem the rest of the country has with police shootings is happening there. **Arresting Power** opens with a 911 call regarding Aaron Campbell. Campbell's brother had died that morning. He is distraught. He goes to his girlfriend Angie Jones's house. She reports to her aunt that he is not doing well. When she fails to call her aunt back, the police are called. The story unfolds audibly while shots of the location where it happened are shown, and the tension is unbearable. You know what's going to happen, but you also know it shouldn't. Why it does is the question **Arresting Power** repeatedly asks.

The stories are upsetting, but not shocking. They happen too much. **Arresting Power** does a good job of keeping the focus on the victim's stories. The police factor in, but aside from informing that the officers got off, little is shown of the procedures of the court system. The focus is on the community and its reaction to what is happening. It is inspiring even if you know there is still so much to be done to stop it.

The most shocking detail of **Arresting Power** is the fact that the Oregon constitution did not allow African American people to live in Oregon. It was repealed in 2001, only fifteen years ago. That is something you would not be surprised to hear about Alabama, but Oregon? It is unbelievable.

Arresting Power is not an easy film to watch. Each time you hear about another person being shot by police, you can't help but get upset. The filmmakers use an interesting method of scratching the film on the asphalt at the crime scene. They compare it to making charcoal rubbings on gravestones. When the scratched up film is shown, it makes a sound like gunshots. It is an eerie effect. (arrestingpower.com, DVD $25 ppd. PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207)

Bands reuniting always come with a caveat. The number of original members participating usually makes a big difference. While I don't mind a reunion per se, I am always realistic about what I am getting into. It's never going to be the same. Yet Mark E. Smith inexplicably seems to get an exception. He's always entertaining no matter who is playing with him.

The Fall: It's Not Repetition, It's Discipline purports to be an in-depth look at the Fall. Of course, it's mostly a look at Mark E. Smith. The filmmakers manage to get an interview with Smith. He gives them a hard time at first, mocking their questions. What is it about 1986? But when Smith settles, he gives them something of an insight into himself. Well, as much as you would expect.

The Fall: It's Not Repetition, It's Discipline really relies on John Peel and Grant Showbiz to explain Smith. Peel is the BBC radio legend and he has a lot of respect for the Fall's music. Everything he says makes sense in the nonsensical world of the Fall. Showbiz is the Fall's record producer. His opinions have a bit more business bias, but are still insightful.

Unfortunately, **The Fall: It's Not Repetition, It's Discipline** gets only one lineup of the Fall for an interview. It's one from 2003. That's where you have to draw the line. Is this a Mark E. Smith documentary or a Fall documentary? I will say I am always entertained when I see a Fall show, but these days you can always tell the musicians are more in awe of Smith than collaborating with him. It would be nice to have some dissenting opinions.

While **The Fall: It's Not Repetition, It's Discipline** states on the cover "definitive documentary," it hardly is. It was filmed over thirteen years but seems like it was thrown together in a few weeks. Plus Henry Rollins and Thurston Moore make appearances. (facebook.com/thefalldoc)

One of the best compliments I ever received was when a friend commented that my *MRR* film columns remind him of Francois Truffaut's film criticism. Truffaut is one of my favorite filmmakers, so I was equally flattered and flummoxed. I'd like to think I am that good.

A quality I like about Truffaut's film criticism is that he doesn't necessarily cover the whole movie. He finds parts that interest him and focuses on those. You get an insight into a film without getting everything laid out for you. In that way, I think we may be similar in our styles.

Hitchcock/Truffaut got me in because I had read *Hitchcock*, the book the documentary was based on. In 1962, Truffaut interviewed Alfred Hitchcock for a week on all his films. Truffaut was a fan and as a result he really delved into Hitchcock's work. Truffaut and his fellow French critics and filmmakers are credited with increasing Hitchcock's reputation from popular moviemaker to auteur.

What got me excited about **Hitchcock/Truffaut** was to see and hear the conversation between Hitchcock and Truffaut. Reading it is interesting, but getting to experience it as if I was there seemed so exciting. Unfortunately, it was not to be.

Even though the whole week of interviews were recorded, **Hitchcock/Truffaut** focuses more on modern filmmakers and how the book influenced their work. Interviewed are Martin Scorsese, David Fincher, Arnaud Desplechin, Kiyoshi Kurosawa, Wes Anderson, James Gray, Olivier Assayas, Richard Linklater, Peter Bogdanovich, and Paul Schrader. The rest of the documentary's focus is on Hitchcock's films. There is little of the interaction between Truffaut and Hitchcock during the interviews. That seems like a big mistake. (cohenmedia.net)

I have also started watching **Vinyl** on HBO. I will have to reserve comment until I see where this series is going (there's only been two episodes as I write). In the meantime, I find it very amusing. It's 1973, the main character runs a successful record label and is ready to sell the company to a foreign conglomerate until he discovers the New York Dolls. He gives up the money for the music, his company. and even ostensibly the people who work for him who would have inevitably lost their jobs with the buyout. Will punk save the music industry? We'll see.

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, Maximum Rocknroll, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. carolynkeddy.com

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(CR) Camylle Reynolds
(CS) Chris Hubbard
(DG) Dan Goetz
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(MC) Mitch Cardwell
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MW) Max Wickham
(RL) Ray Lujan
(RW) Ryan Wells
(RO) Rotten Ron Ready
(SZ) Shit Zoo
(WB) Will Blomquist
(WN) Robert Collins

ABSOLUT – "Hell's Highest Power" LP

This record is so fukkd. Canada's ABSOLUT have destroyed faithful listeners with manic D-beat/noise punk before…but this shit is something else. The guitars, as relentless as they are gratuitous, sound like the ghost of Uchida taking over modern hardcore, while everything from the song construction to the mind-melting vocals plant this release firmly in a realm all its own. Those vocals are actually the biggest distraction, with echoes and reverb taking focus away from the truly jaw dropping construction of these tracks… and then there are the leads. The leads are something else entirely….like I just shake my head, pick up the needle and start from the beginning to try to figure it out. But not before Side A closes with a mellow solo classic rock piece. A total mind-fuckingly excellent noise punk/hardcore/D-beat record. Seriously…the shit is weird. I caution those who want to listen while on hallucinogens. (WN)
(D-Takt & Råpunk)

ACID FAST – "Last Night On Earth" LP

When did it stop being cool to play pop punk in the Bay Area?? A decade or two ago, everyone and their brother was in a pop punk band out here. Scenes change, I guess. Music changes. But lucky for the pogo loving punks out here, at least we have ACID FAST. They are one of the best (if not *the* best) pop punk bands out here right now, and they continue to give us a prime example of the difference between "cool" and "awesome." The music they play hasn't been *cool* for a long time, but it is most certainly awesome! The lyrics are sometimes heavy, sometimes poetic, and sometimes emotional. The music is always upbeat and catchy as hell. The first time I listened to this record, I thought it was equally as good as their first album (which ruled). After now listening to it a second time, I think it's way better. When I listen to it a third time, who knows what the fuck will happen! (FS)
(Salinas / Stupid Bag)

AGGRESSION PACT – "Desecrate" EP

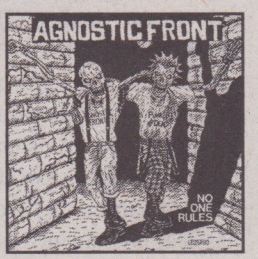
On the surface, this is an easy record to pigeonhole. Simple verse-chorus-verse '80s-derived hardcore played at speed. That being said, this is a hell of a lot better than most of the retro throwback rabble. The muted, slightly boxy recording gives it a very authentic analog feel, the riffs and tastefully limited leads are catchy and memorable, the vocals are venomous (as befits the bleak as fuck lyrical content), and the drumming in particular is just fantastic. Totally on point and giving the band a frantic drive that elevates more routine parts. An excellent debut release. Members of WASTE MANAGEMENT and GREEN BERET, for those who care (AU)
(Painkiller)

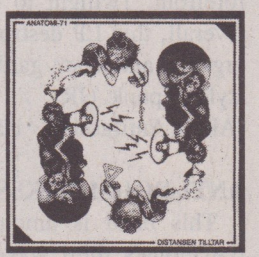
AGNOSTIC FRONT – "No One Rules" LP

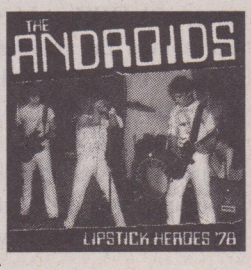
Fucking amazing! This might be the best AGNOSTIC FRONT record ever. If you haven't already heard the 1984 Don Fury live in the studio tape, you're in store for the rawest document of AGNOSTIC FRONT at their down and dirty rat and junkie infested L.E.S. peak. This is basically the *Raw Unleashed* CD put to vinyl. The first copies included a 7" of *United Blood* demos to make it complete. Beautifully packaged with a huge ass booklet full of photos and flyers that'll make you cream your bleach-spotted jeans. This is the rereleased booklet without the photo of a band member wearing a SKREWDRIVER shirt. Whatever. Strap on your boots, smoke some dust, and by all means, *buy this record*!!! (RO)
(Radio Raheem)

ANATOMI-71 – "Distansen Tilltar" LP

Super-competent råpunk delivered with style. ANATOMI-71 have been kicking around for quite a while now, and this release should be no surprise to fans of the band—tight as hell with killer vocal trade-offs and some crushing riffs. The SABBATH-esque intro to "Hårt Kilmat Svensson" was a nice surprise leading into a brilliantly frantic, uniquely Swedish driving tune







before returning to that smashing slow part for the outro. An equally pleasant surprise was the GLO cover, an interesting foray into straight-ahead punk brilliantly adapted to the ANATOMI-71 style. "Fortsättning Följer" is probably the pick of the litter, delivering absolutely everything this band is capable of, mixing slow breakdowns with a speedy verse/chorus, memorable guitar-led melodies and throat-shredding vocals, though the rock'n'roll licks of "Genial Idiot" are a definite highlight as well. Killer LP from a time-tested band. (AU)
(D-Takt & Råpunk)

ANDROIDS – "Lipstick Heroes '78" EP

Vinyl four-song EP rescues these solid tracks from an otherwise obscure fate on an out-of-print CD comp. I can only surmise that the early '78 UK media backlash against punk kept these otherwise ace tracks in the can all this time. Solid shit in the vein of the USERS or BLITZKRIEG BOP but honestly lacking that one standout anthem. Nothing you would kick off the turntable, though... (RW)
(Radio Raheem / Spit)

ANOPHELI – "The Ache of Want" LP

ANOPHELI play a style of folk crust where the basic band formation demonstrates punk with profound sadness while the uplifting classical instruments throughout elevate the tracks with optimism. It all sounds very tragic under gorgeous cello, acoustic guitar, and vibrant singing. Think HIS HERO IS GONE meets GUTS PIE EARSHOT. The sincerity is epic, the pace does not lack ingenuity, and the vocals are witching and wretched. Side A is more straightforward crust with said classical accents. while Side B focuses more on hardcore speed with the classical instruments rising brighter into the forefront. Twilight to dawn, so to speak. Overall, this LP destroys and is a unique, organic, and avant-garde expression of this style of punk. (JR)
(Alerta Antifascista / Halo of Flies)

ANTI-DOGMATIKSS – "Nooooo" LP

This band is among my preferred of Barcelona's third wave of hardcore punk along with HHH and L'ODI SOCIAL. They represented the renewal of punk's protest potential in the mid to late 1980s. Listening to this now, they seem ahead of their time both musically and poetically. Urgent, intense, and fuzzy hardcore which manages to infuse melody, harmony, and catchy hooks throughout. I've always admired their intelligent lyrics because they're an important document of protest culture from that forgotten period, speaking out against Barcelona's bid for the Olympics, NATO and militarism, and Spain's overall embrace of the neoliberal economic model. *Nooooo* (one "o" for each Olympic ring) is the complete session recorded in France in 1987. Seven of the songs were released on a tape as their second demo in 1988. Those demo songs and earlier recordings of the other tracks appear on previous reissues, but they have been out of print for a while and this is the first time the whole session is released together on vinyl, so I think this record is totally necessary and justified. Informative photocopied insert written by the two surviving members (I hope you can read Catalan). Must have for fans of Spanish/Iberian punk. (LT)
(Black Sheep / El Forat / No Thanks!)

APATHETICS – "My Life Is Amazing" LP

Melodic punk of the dark and moody variety out of Finland. If I didn't know better, I'd have pegged them as being from Portland. The steady drum pulse and keyboard hum create a thick background for the sparkly guitar lines and dual vocals to dance all around. ARCTIC FLOWERS come to mind first, but APATHETICS are maybe a little more consistently dark than that group. There are so many bands doing a style similar to this that I've pretty much stopped paying attention, but APATHETICS have great songs and lots of parts that stick in my head. Great stuff. (MA)
(Bad Hair Life / Brown)

ARGENTAVIS / DISPARA – split LP

Santa Rosa, California's ARGENTAVIS deliver up some real murky D-beat crust. They've got that heavy, driving dirge that never gets too fast, but it is relentless. It's like how an evil look can sometimes be worse than a total freak out. That's what these guys are like, an evil look from the driver of a tank that is slowly driving over you. DISPARA has a picture of wolves ripping some dude to shreds on their side of the cover—I think it's a metaphor, 'cause these dudes rip some crust to shreds! Sounds like the chase that led up to this scene. Get it while it's still bleeding. (BA)
(Bad People / Wulf Pack)

ARMS RACE – "Gotta Get Out" EP

ARMS RACE is yet another entry into the great halls of NWOBHC. Six rabid, knuckle-draggers of bruising hardcore on this slab and if you expected any less from this lot, you're a damn fool. If you knew what to expect and haven't grabbed this, or the European pressing on QCHC yet, you're hopeless (unless you're penniless and broke.) (JU)
(Painkiller)

BERLINER WEISSE – "High Five" CD

This German band dishes out the gravelly voiced punk that is reminiscent of LEATHERFACE and SNUFF. A couple tunes with an acoustic vibe, too. With vocals in German, and not knowing German, I can't really comment on the lyrical content, which is usually a difference maker. Although I'm certainly not seeing any red flags based on band photos. A good band for '90s punk fans who are down with German bands. (RL)
(Spirit of the Streets)

BIG HUGE – "Orama" EP

Debut offering from NYC rockers whose spillage seeps across genres. Self-professed DIY punk / power pop may fit the tag, but they borrow the confident itchiness of someone like KING TUFF then swoop toward doo-doo-boppin' à la SHANNON AND THE CLAMS and that ilk. None of it is ineffective, the band is clearly capable, I just wish there was something quintessentially their own to be heard here. I'm sure many will eat it up until they solidify their identity, though. Lotsa promise here. (MC)
(Nobody's Baby)

BUTCHER – "Holding Back The Night" LP

Sick riffs, a trebly edge to the sound, and fucking fast, good songs. What else would you need? The ugly, wrung-out vocals are courtesy of Jack Control, and BUTCHER has some of the catchiness later-era SEVERED HEAD OF STATE could deliver. BUTCHER is slightly more diverse, but still raging start to finish. Anyone who loved SEVERED HEAD OF STATE will want this. (JM)
(self-released)

BRÜNNER, TODESMARSCH / EVIDENCE SMRTI – split EP

Czech crusties EVIDENCE SMRTI definitely tip their hand by copping the ANTISECT font on this release. They offer up two cuts of mid-tempo metallic crust with a particularly great marching riff at the end of "Hlad" that will have you spilling your homebrew and banging your skullet. BRÜNER TODESMARSCH,

while still crusty, are a bit quicker and more overtly metallic with some distinctly Swedish-influenced string-bending leads. The vocals are a little dry and passionless for my taste, but the gang vocal backups sound fantastic. (AU)
(self-released)

CITY RAM WADDY / SCREAMING ABDABS – split LP

The cover of the SCREAMING ABDABS side is so wild that if I saw this in a store I would just buy it! Sue Catwoman makeup, falling apart 1960s fringed go-go dress, shaved head, fishnets and decomposing 1920s babydoll shoes…The music is insane and primal, recorded in 1978, a totally inept stomp, like a band Eddie Munster would have formed as a teen, all members on speed with no musical experience necessary and a vicious Betty Boop on vocals. But this is so much cooler than that sounds! The vocals are fucking incendiary, cartoon like and merciless, playful and hateful! Gassed in the garage motherfuckers. It comes with a newsprint poster foldout that details band's reception in Sydney at the time, and reveals the fact that they used stereo speakers as amps! The singer died in SF in the 1990s apparently at the hands of a shitty ex, giving this an even more powerful feel. The B-Side is a one man band the drummer of the ABDABS did called CITY RAM WADDY which is somewhat like TRONICS trying to play SUICIDE. It's totally insane and terrible but actually amazing. If you are at all into falling apart shit-fi masterworks add this to your want list! I have. Coolest Sydney punkers. (LG)
(Wallaby Beat)

COÄCCION – "Bipolar" LP

Long running Tijuana crust/D-beat warlords COÄCCION burst out of the gate with a low-end rapid-fire assault and do not let up for a second. Guttural vocals rasp their way through desolation while the band churns out monstrous crust with way more starts and stops than the genre should allow. The sheer tonnage is noteworthy, but the way these fellows bulldoze their way through the style is next level. Favorite track: "P.F.H." (WN)
(Mundo En Kaos)

NATO COLES & THE BLUE DIAMOND BAND – "Promises To Deliver" CD

I think everyone here already knows, or at least assumes, that Nato *really* loves BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN and the REPLACEMENTS, and this straight-up rock offering does absolutely nothing to challenge those assumptions. Now, this disc is good, really good, but it sounds like a 50-something ex-punk trying to take it easy and just masterfully slay some well-written rock. It's tight. Not exactly punk at times, but it's killer rock. My major beef is that there are, like, six extra songs on here that weren't on the original LP, and I think CDs are totally fucking stupid. Oh well. (DZ)
(Rum Bar)

COMBAT KNIFE – "Extreme Combat" EP

COMBAT KNIFE triumph as an amalgamation of the best of contemporary hardcore and punk. This star(ish)-studded group walks the line of USHC plus Japanese HC that plenty try, but few achieve in any memorable fashion. An obvious contemporary exception is BLAZING EYE, who share with COMBAT KNIFE guttural dog vocals and those driving 1-2 beats. The guitars are fuzzed to raw shit, but open up with leads that mix paranoia and melody in equal measure. The Side B opener "Wounded in Combat" builds tension through round after round of slammable-pogo before erupting into a manic sped-up mess. Rhythm is god here, not just in drums and riffs, but in vocals that spatter in a controlled chaos. It's hard to pin this record down, but it is remarkable enough to have six hardcore songs that breathe and exist on their own, much less to have them fit together so well on a single EP. Highly recommended for fans of the word "combat." (SZ)
(Video Disease / Warthog Speak)

CONMEN – "Dick Don't Work" EP

With a title track like "Dick Don't Work," you're not necessarily expecting a new, mind-blowing sound. In that respect, CONMEN definitely deliver. This is solid, difficult to dislike, mid-tempo, catchy punk rock. And it starts to grow on you as you listen to more and more songs. "Thrill Me" is a kick ass song and will get the record into my Top 10. In fact, outside of the title track, the record is pretty solid. Keep up the good work. (KK)
(Neutral Accents / Stabilizer)

CONSTANT FEAR –"Dronekill" LP

The first thing you notice is the guitars—supercharged Boston HC buzzsaws that drive the whole recording. Those guitars take full attention, so much so that it wasn't until the intro to "I Will Haunt You Forever" that I switched my focus to the ferocious 'core hiding under that distortion. It's all here, young punks: the perfect combination of speed and power, burly vocals, riffs for days…it's like SSD and INFEST at the same damn time. Hardcore punk. (WN)
(Painkiller / Video Disease)

THE COUNTRY DARK – "Hypnic Jerk" CD

There is something about rockabilly that always sounds so inauthentic. Even if the men (or women) playing it are full-fledged cowboys(girls), somehow the music never represents it properly. It doesn't help that this CD starts off with a song called "Demon In Bambi Lee," about an evil temptress she-devil who is just waiting nakedly for the narrator. Of course,

there's also "Skank Ass" and "Useless (Like Tits On A Boar)." Even with this alternative worldview, the music lacks any sense of danger. (CK)
(Humu)

DAKHMA – "Raze" LP

Unholy moly, this is some of the finest blackened crust I have ever heard! Sounds like HELLBASTARD playing WOLVES IN THE THRONE ROOM on top of Euronymous' grave. Completely raw and unhinged, but they've got that wistful black harmony always trying to scream out through the maelstrom. They just nailed it. Keeping it real tight when they want to, but when the time is right they just lose fucking control. Your world will disintegrate. Nothing will be left. Get this! (BA)
(All We Know / IFB)

DAMAGED HEAD – "Regler, Regler" EP

A little different and a lot better than the LP I reviewed a couple of months ago. Three out of four tracks are unhinged, scummy D-beat bangers with memorable riffs and desperate vocals. These songs actually kinda remind me of SCURVY DOGS when that band was at their best. Second song is decent rock hardcore. Whereas they previously did this style in a more ANNIHILATION TIME circa *Bad Reputation* manner, "Det Bästa Av Två Världar" is a more nondescript groove, though certainly not bad, and has an interesting quasi-psych interlude towards the end. I'm into this. (DG)
(D-takt & Råpunk)

DAYLIGHT ROBBERY – "Accumulated Error" LP

I'm pretty sure this is the third LP for these fools, and it's a doozy. DAYLIGHT ROBBERY plays 16th note-driven post-punk / melodic punk that's anchored down by solid, melodic bass lines which give the clean, discordant guitar room to meander around. The thing that sets this apart for me is that both of the vocalists are outright *singing* melodies that carry the songs rather than screaming through their rage. There's still rage for the landlords and cops of this world, though it's tempered by a levelheaded thoughtfulness. There are also some straight up pop songs on here. If you're already a fan of DAYLIGHT ROBBERY, I can't imagine being let down by this one. Solid through and through. (GH)
(Deranged)

DEATH SEX ADVOCATES / MONITOR LIZARD – split LP

Noisy and chaotic lightning fast punk from DEATH SEX ADVOCATES with shredding/snotty vocals reminiscent of Annie from BLATZ. It's a slightly heavier version of the same animal from MONITOR LIZARD, with a deeper and more sinister snarl from the vocals and an emphasis on crushing slows. Both bands hail from Cincinnati, and the two bands combine forces to drop 26 steamers right in your lap. I hope you brought beer. (WN)
(Realicide Youth)

DEEP THROATS – "Good Bad Pretty" LP

I was lucky enough to see DEEP THROATS in a '90s San Francisco that is now long gone. Perched upon impossibly tall high heels and wearing makeup that did not give a fuck, the band could be found playing just about anywhere in the Mission District or the Tenderloin (two once-seedy SF neighborhoods). The band was always a beacon for true outsiders. Too queer for the gay scene and not punk enough for the punks, they brought their fucked up world on stage…or to the sidewalk or any space that they could plug in long enough to play a few songs. I've rarely seen a band project such a clear image of welfare hotels, drugs, desperation, triumph, total "fuck you" queerness, and what San Francisco once meant through their songs. This LP was originally recorded and conceived as DEEP THROATS' second album back in 1999, but it hasn't seen the light of day until now. They take their influences from T. REX, BOWIE and other glam acts but execute in a way that is just *fucked up*. They also existed in a scene that fed off of each other in comfortable (and uncomfortable) ways that included SUBTONIX, the VANISHING, FLOATING CORPSES, and VERONICA LIP GLOSS AND THE EVIL EYES. They were led by Tracy's big, clean guitar tone that echoed that of the CRAMPS' Poison Ivy and vocals that ranged from a wavering growl into a haunting falsetto. The drums stomp. The bass booms. This LP is most definitely a perfect snapshot of a time and place in SF that does not exist anymore. In its context, this is a perfect record. I only hope that it finds its audience of runaways, outsiders, and true misfits trying to find their place in this harsh, fucked up world. (GH)
(Castle Face)

DESGRACIADOS – "Humanidad en la Oscuridad" EP

First of all, this is some damned good graphic design. Between the dot-matrix fonts and timeless art, it took some convincing to get me past the assumption that this was a lost '80s demo re-release. That sense of DESGRACIADOS being a band out of time carries over to the music, which frankly sounds more like Barcelona '83 than Vancouver '16. They strike a nearly perfect balance of pounding D-beats, heavily reverbed passionate shouts, and sneaky guitar melody, recalling everything from MG-15 to LA UVI to SS-20. The first three cuts are full on hardcore, and "Caos" in particular is just a gem of a 50 second blazer. They close the record with a brilliant galloping punk tune ("Enemigos Callejeros") just to prove that they're a fucking punk band, and don't you forget it. It's been a hell of a long time since I've been assigned a record this amazing without it being something that was already squarely on my radar. If you're at all into Spanish or South/Central American punk, you're going to fucking love this record. Best record I got this month by a long shot, and maybe top ten of the year material. (AU)
(Deranged)

DISKOBRA – "A Diskobra Visszatér" EP

It does say "D-Beat Raw Punk" right on their logo, so my job is pretty easy here. Ripping, off the rails raw shits, just as adept at dropping things into a lower register to really go for the gut as they are at taking a fast riff and playing it just a *little* faster than they should…which is actually the perfect speed. I loved the demo from this Budapest band, but they've gotten progressively more destructive over subsequent releases (check out the four band *Orbán Népe* comp also reviewed in this issue). (WN)
(Aback Distribuce)

DOUBLE CHEESE – "I Hate The Sixties" EP

Well, ya wouldn't know it by the sound of things! Let's just say these fuzzed Euro garage punks wouldn't really exist without the decade they supposedly hate. Maybe they love the 2000s? They fuckin' must, as gang vocal garage punk is the name of the game here, wooly and wyld and all that crap. You could do worse. You could also do nothing at all. (MC)
(Frantic City)

DUNG / SMZB – split EP

For my money, this is the most crucial record you will find in the pages of this fine rag until next month. *The Music:* DUNG play high-energy catchy punk with an attitude transported straight from '80s determination and '90s USDIY hardcore…plus a relentless saxophone on "No One Gets Out Alive." SMZB are more straightforward *punk*, rooted in early UK hooks, with an emphasis on POGUES-style pub sing alongs. *The Content:* The nucleus of DUNG (formerly CARBURETOR DUNG) have been stalwarts of the Malaysian punk scene since its inception in the early '90s, and if you think that you have a hard time living life as a punk, you should know that these punks had to take a break last year while members where in jail…*for being punks*. SMZB vocalist Wu Wei's interview in *MRR* #384 was great, and if you read it then you have some idea what this band has been through…two decades as actual punk revolutionaries in communist China. The best part here is that the record isn't just "important," it's also really good. (WN)
(Genjing)

DYKE DRAMA – "Tender Resignation" 12"

Whether or not you enjoy *Tender Resignation* will depend less on how much you like punk music and more on how much you like music made by punks. DYKE DRAMA is Sadie Switchblade, best known for fronting G.L.O.S.S., but in this form presents something more akin to her time in PEEPLE WATCHIN', a pop punk band from the Boston metro area. On this 12" we get six mid-tempo rock songs, all very emotionally candid and anthemic. The last track is a blown-out phone/boombox recording of Sadie solo with a guitar, but the rest of the tracks bring us a full band through the magic of multi-track recording. Some of the songs have somewhat of an alt-country vibe (perhaps the OLD 97'S or SLOBBERBONE) while some seem to reach for the feeling of SUPERCHUNK circa *Foolish* or *Here's Where the Strings Come In* in their attempts to be indie rock anthems. The lyrics are relatable and the songs are well written, but hopefully when the full-length is recorded there's a bit more variety in the tempos and more chances taken with the types of songs (musically speaking). (LP)
(Salinas)

EINERBANDE – "Halbvoll/Halbleer"

EINERBANDE translates to "Gang of One," which makes me laugh since that's what I call the current version of GANG OF FOUR. There is even a slight GANG OF FOUR sound on the song "Halbleer." The music is mostly straight up poppy indierock. The vocals sound very serious. Overall, there is an '80s college rock vibe. Flashback. (CK)
(Tomatenplatten)

EVAKUATE – "Blood Money" LP

This band is from Southern California, and they definitely sound like it. Slick, radio-friendly melodic hardcore that would definitely be at home on a tour package with BAD RELIGION or GOOD RIDDANCE. It's all very competently done, but musically it's deeply uninspiring. The saving grace is that the band have really great politics and (for the style) remarkably insightful lyrics, touching on subjects ranging from police violence to the fucked-up state of the American healthcare system (a subject also addressed by the record's title and packaging) and standing in solidarity with the oppressed punks of Aceh, Indonesia. Their music may not be terribly challenging or abrasive, but at least EVAKUATE are employing their very accessible music to address a variety of important topics. (AU)
(self-released)

EX-CULT – "Stick the Knife In" EP

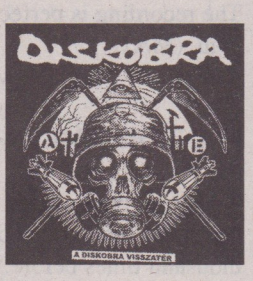
The enigmatic EX-CULT are back with a mean sounding thing about a gambler (I think?!) and it's as good as their other stuff, although not as *great* as some of their stuff. The band occupies a weird space, showcasing disparate non-hardcore influences and sounds without being obnoxious about it. There's WARSAW and maybe the WIPERS if they weren't little babies, but it's not all melancholy like that bullshit. I like hard punk and EX-CULT, and considering my status as punk's #1 ideologue and tastemaker, you should too. (BB)
(In The Red)

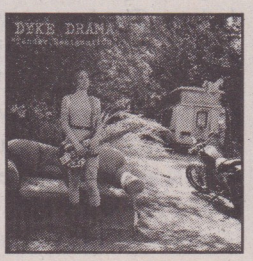
FAST TIMES – "Pioneers of Nothing" CD

This is a current band from Cape Cod, not the New Jersey FAST TIMES or any other band who has had this name. This band exists at the intersection of sing-along pogo punk complete with wandering basslines that are prominent in the mix, and the kind of "melodic hardcore" that's one or two steps past Fat Wreck Chords stuff, though there's definitely some Fat Mike-type singing towards the end of the CD. Music for being under 21 and goofy, relatively carefree living. (DG)
(self-released)

FEELS – LP

This is on Castle Face, it was recorded by Ty Segall and the cover art was created by Jessica from SUSAN, so it seems like a real *sound of modern Los Angeles* record. The music is definitely in that sphere, with some of the psyche-rock sounds exhibited by THEE OH SEES and Ty's modern groups, though I prefer the songs that veer off from that specific current rock/shred guitar style. It's such a part of this modern psyche oeuvre, which in general makes me wish that there was less *rawk* and more actual psychedelic impulses apparent. It just all seems real bloke-y. If you are gonna be a moderne psyche group why not





channel the song "Coming Down" by the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA instead of just endless BLUE CHEER style romps? Anyway back to FEELS, the singer's voice sort of reminded me of Kate from BIG EYES, that tough city-worn intonation... My favorite songs were "Unicorn," which is a cool snooty punker rampage through the savage reality of being judged on your appearance and the stop and start snarl of "Play It Cool." The dirge-y parts swiftly pummeled by a lady ripping apart the small talkers and judgmental wretches that plague the landscape of modern life. When she yells "*Hell, California*" over and over again at the end! These songs have a cool "Rip Her to Shreds" feel, which I preferred to the rest I guess. This is a cool record, especially if you are into this current sound / scene. (LG)
(Castle Face)

FESTA DESPERATO – "Alergie" EP

Apparently released back in 2013, this appears to be the farewell EP by Czech crust masters FESTA DESPERATO. Super tight, blazing fast crusty hardcore at a barreling speed. They do well to challenge the formula and keep things interesting with occasional melodies and varied tempos. CROW meets EXTREME NOISE TERROR, but in Czech. The recording is perfect and the intensity is high. (MA)
(Gasmask / Miruus Levyt / Painajinen)

FLESH HAMMERS – "Fattest Band in the West...Live" CD

Old ex-punks stuck in a 1980s "punk" bar scene, and yes, you have heard this a thousand times before. It's supposedly live, but I swear it sounds like the same tired applause track in between every song. Oh, and these guys aren't even *kinda* fast. (DZ)
(self-released)

FLESH RAG – "It Ain't Enough" EP

Ooh, a tasty little treat this month! I dunno shit about FLESH RAG, but this was recorded in Hamilton, Ontario, so they're probably Canadian? Right. I always hated reviews that name drop band names from 30 years ago, so that is what I am going to do here. The best song is the first song—I can tell they like DEAD BOYS (especially STIV BATORS) and the WEIRDOS "Life of Crime" single. If you combined it all, that is what it sounds like. *Trust me*. Maybe it's just an angry rustbelt accent over slashy rock'n'roll punk. The second short song is some fast hardcore song that sucks. The B-side song is also very good, it's more '60s junk inspired bash jangle plod garage punk. I would recommend this, so please take note. Limited to 500 copies. (GB)
(It's Trash / Loose Lips)

FRUSTRATION – "Autour de Toi/ Victoires Prochaines"

It's been a while since I've heard from these French post-punkers. It does my heart good to know they're still at it. Here we have two tense, driving numbers. One is an original, and the other is a new wave tinged cover of an '80s band called SECOND CHAMBRE. This cold wave style is definitely in vogue of late, but FRUSTRATION have been doing it for almost fifteen years, and few, if any, have done it quite so well. (AM)
(Blind)

GARY WRONG GROUP – "Away In Heathen Darkness" 12"

Gar' and the gang have inched further toward blacked-out oblivion with each outing, but this is Heathen Darkness we're talking about. Next Level! "Stuck Inside" is punk dirge misery that I'll play all year. "Destroy You" is antagonistic noise assholery that breaks brains just like how the sleeve promises. Synth scuzz and guitar doom brackets those hits and congeals the whole mess. I was miserable and hated myself before I played this, but now I fuckin' hate you, too. I love GARY WRONG GROUP, though, for only they have the balls to kick off 2016 with the most fucked punk anywhere. (MC)
(Scavenger Of Death)

GLASSBOOTS – "Demotape" EP

GLASSBOOTS is the "solo noise project" of DD OWEN, the young Baltimore man of SICK THOUGHTS renown. Noise is a vague term, but rest assured, this is 2016 and you, the listener, are not being subject to some bogus power electronics vanity exercise. I'm pretty sure the A-side starts with a sample of the hamsterdance.com theme before staggering into some RUSTED SHUT-level guitar cacophony. There are drums, but they're buried way down there. The vocals are intelligible but nasty nonetheless, a Beetlejuice-esque gurgle that can lean on a line like "*I want to wear you*" until it passes for a hook. Not sure what to make of that one, but it is hard to argue with lyrics such as "*Got a solution / for this confusion / extinction of the human race*." There are no tempo changes, no fast parts, and only one guitar solo (it's only one note). A worthy addition to the DD OWEN discogronomicon. (EW)
(Ken Rock)

GØGGS – "She Got Harder/Billy Is A Runaway"

Blasting, future-now punk racket from this hybrid combo made up of EX-CULT and FUZZ honchos. "She Got Harder" is a knockout—powerful, piercing, and a whole lot tougher than I expected. Leaves you wanting a lot more, which I'm sure is in the pipeline. The flip is a stretched-out IGGY POP cover boasting bonus sax for extra bleating. There's a total mad scientist sound across both sides here that makes you both tense and intrigued. Good 45s can be like a drug. This is one of 'em. Buying my own copy now. (MC)
(In The Red)

HARSH WORDS – "Old Sore" EP

HARSH WORDS play harsh, dark hardcore that's frantic, unpredictable, and not easily summed up. It's often fast and thrashy, sometimes slowing to a not-as-speedy place, with a good deal of bleak riffing, and despite the songs constantly winding in different directions, the band always sounds like they're in control of the wheel. There's also lot of technical guitar work that borders on wanking but never crosses that line, and the very obviously overdubbed part in the first song is an awesome touch. The recording is nice and rough around the edges, and the cover of DIE KREUZEN's "Pain" (the best song on *Cows and Beer)* is fitting and does the original a decent amount of justice. (DG)
(All We Know)

HESSIAN WOLF CHILDREN – "No More Excuses" EP

Most of this 7" is some bland and very basic fastcore. They take a boring hardcore song, add screaming and blast beats, and I'm supposed to get excited? I'm a bit more complex than that. I was totally about to write these guys off, but then the final song, "Hessian Aggression," came on, and I was all "What?!" A total proto death metal, grinding thrasher! That one song fucking rips. Almost makes it worth getting. (BA)
(Burning Tree)

HIGH DIVE – "New Teeth" LP

Pretty mellow, sweet, pop punk with sparse keys from Bloomington, IN. Among others, there's members of GOOD LUCK,

DEFIANCE, OH., ONE REASON, and even TOBY FOSTER in there somewhere, so if you are, or maybe once were, a Plan-It-X fan, chances are you'll be super into this. Heartfelt lyrics and pretty intricate for pop punk without being ridiculously technical or obnoxiously overbearing, but I bet you already knew that. (DZ)
(Salinas)

HOOLIGAN CROONERS – "Hell Yeah!!" CD

Four tunes and four remixes from this European band with vocals in English. Musically, this sounds like slick JOAN JETT meets slick SOCIAL DISTORTION circa 1989. The vocals do have a crooner quality like many college/alternative rock bands from the '80s. Maybe the SMITHEREENS or solo PETER MURPHY? Brings back the "MTV's 120 Minutes" memories. I'm not sure I need to hear a new band doing this today, though. (RL)
(PWVA)

HUMILIATION – "Serene" EP

The first time I found out about what it was to be betrayed I was a freshman in high school. This EP feels like that moment. It recalls the feeling in the pit of your stomach when you look back at how you and your friends found out about punk (the skate shop at the end of Columbus Street that was replaced by the touristy Kodak store) and the stinging agony at the thought of how distant that all is now. The arc of experiences from excitement, understanding, all the way to emptiness, this record achieves that—the THROBBING GRISTLE ambiance, the blown-out production, and a twist of DEADGUY math. A more contemporary comparison is MIGRAINE's second EP. I really liked this record. For fans of: eating alone in sadness, figuring a way out, telling your mom you love her. (MW)
(Warthog Speak)

I'M AN INTESTINE – "Out Of Reach" EP

Indescribable tonnage from Florida. This is grinding crust that sounds (and feels) desperate instead of calculated—the fasts are so manic and unhinged, but everything sounds totally massive. Low-end distortion blends into walls of guitars giving the abrupt starts and stops even more power, and the vocals are anxiety inducing and ruthless. This slab will churn your guts… while the grind is next level terrifying, the double kick underneath the filthy slow riffing on "Best Friends" is the moment when I mentally waved the white flag—I'm not going to hear anything heavier this month. (WN)
(All We Know / Financial Ruin)

INDONESIAN JUNK – CD

After a demo, a live tape, and a single, this is the first full-length from these Wisconsin rock dudes, and it's the best I've heard from them so far. They recall early punk, rock, and pub rock. It sounds like the perfect driving-drunk-through-some-prairies-at-4:00 am style music. They take cues (and possibly *riffs)* from the HEARTBREAKERS, GOLDEN EARRING, DEAD BOYS, and STOOGES, and they don't update a goddamn thing, which is fine. A good chunk of the songs settle into a slow groove, like the whole band just took a handful of 'ludes together and peaced out. Give a call to your dealer, put this on, and tune out. (GH)
(Rum Bar)

INMATES – LP

You know the deal: Cleveland scumbags who have been pumping out vitrol in this and other bands for over two decades. Takes cues—or is that orders?—from GISM, LIP CREAM, POISON IDEA's late '80s output (who themselves were undoubtedly listening to GISM and LIP CREAM at the time), yada yada yada. Lyrically it's "destroy everything" and the music matches, and 99% of the time I'd dismiss this as cartoon bullshit, but I'm taking them at their word. Even the "crust dust" skit. Despite us just getting this record now, it came out in 2014. (DG)
(Painkiller)

IRON GUTS KELLY – "Bloody Kansas" CD

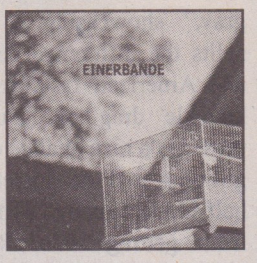
I'm kinda stumped here…a heavy, grungy metal/Oi! hybrid concept album? Yeah…stumped. There are plenty of moments where you just feel like you're listening to a hard rock record, but then IRON GUTS KELLY smacks you in the face with a track like "Joshua's Song" and you're moshing to meat and potatoes US hardcore. I mean, really it sounds like a bunch of skinheads who got old and started playing heavy rock'n'roll—and I honestly think that's actually what IRON GUTS KELLY are in 2016—but that description makes it sound like *Bloody Kansas* isn't good…and that couldn't be further from the truth. This thing is a creamer from start to finish; meaty riffs, solid songwriting. I'm confused, but I like it. Or maybe I'm confused *because* I like it. (WN)
(Violent Pacification)

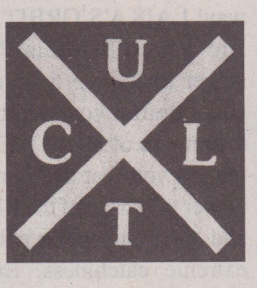
THE KENDOLLS – "Autonomania" CD

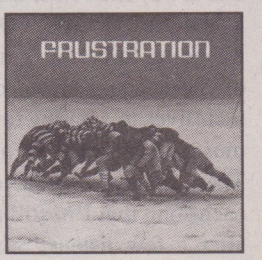
Swedish band the KENDOLLS have Epitaph written all over them. Like a dirtier AGNOSTIC FRONT that's overloaded with distorted, heavy, metallic guitars and plenty of pop punk "Oh-oh" chorus gang vocals. The first song, "Black Sunday," has a righteous minutes-long intro riff that will definitely get your attention. From there, you'll either love it or hate it. (CR)
(Byhala / White Russian)

KRONOFOGDEN / MASSGRAV – split EP

A nice pairing of Swedish hardcore acts that manage to push the sound of kång forward in an era of emulation and unabashed recycling. This split finds MASSGRAV about to hit their 20th year as a band! Bonkers. These Stockholm vets come out blasting on the strangely posi-sounding "Du gräver din egen







grav," showcasing a mature style that splits the difference between Scandi crust and American fastcore. The Oi!-inflected knuckle drag of "Du fattar ingenting" provides a nice change of pace from all that grinding, and the slower parts of the second half add just enough dynamics to keep things from getting stale. Relative newcomers KRONOFOGDEN bring us three tracks of tight, pummeling hardcore capped off with singalong choruses and some tasty gang vocals. "Flokad" ends their side in more traditional D-takt territory than the rest, and it just might be the strongest track on either side of this record. (WB)
(Blindead Productions)

LAIKA'S ORBIT – "No Matter What It Takes" LP

I'm gonna go ahead and get this out of the way: LAIKA'S ORBIT is a pop punk band. Are you still reading? Okay, cool. Their singer looks like a skin, but that's where it ends. Before you skip by this while having flashbacks of shitty WEASELS worship, let me tell you that this is more in line with the power pop style of the BEAT or the NERVES and pays superb attention to melody and extreme catchiness. Even though they're reminding me of bands from 1982, their energy and urgency keeps them sounding punk, fresh, and vital. It's refreshing as fuck. Plus, the hook in "When Are You Gonna Come Back?" will lodge itself in your brain for hours. Excellent LP. (GH)
(Total Negativity)

LOST BALLOONS – LP

You should already know that if you team up Yusuke Okada (BLOTTO, SUSPICIOUS BEASTS) and Jeff Burke (MARKED MEN, RADIOACTIVITY, POTENTIAL JOHNS), it's going to be fairly incredible, since both of these people have devoted the bulk of their lives to creating timeless, unforgettable music. They really went all out on this one. There are layers and layers of instruments on each song that I'm still trying to sift through after a few listens. Some of the melodies and hooks recall '60s rock'n'roll, but not in a cheesy way at all. There's still the speed and unfuckwithable songwriting that comes with the Burke territory, but Okada seems to temper that mania while still throwing out the hooks that stick with you for life. Acoustic guitars? Psychedelia? Piano? Check. If you read this far, you're already buying this record. Perfection, as usual. (GH)
(Alien Snatch!)

MIDWIVES – "Cowboy Songs" EP

Spastic noise punk with a Midwestern feel. The drive and swagger of ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT paired with the muscular bass rhythms of SHELLAC and the tinfoil guitar of SCRATCH ACID. Don't worry, the whole thing sounds more cohesive than that description might make you think. (AM)
(Dusty Medical)

MODERN KICKS – "The Kicks Ain't Alright" CD

I'm just gonna run under the assumption that the MODERN KICKS moniker is a nod to the EXPLODING HEARTS track, and it's not a bad comparison. A lot of the tracks on this record run the gamut of influences between CHEAP TRICK ("We're All Alright") to the ZEROS ("Hole In My Head") and more contemporary acts like the HEART ATTACKS, all with a definite private press '70s feel. I was nodding my head from start to finish. For fans of: bubble gum, hangin' in the desert, getting home at 7:00 am. (MW)
(La Rosa)

MORAL PANIC – "Your Decline" EP

Sydney drunk punk from 2012, recorded after one day's practice, apparently. The lack of practice doesn't show, as the playing is tightly wound, but perhaps the record does benefit from a lack of finesse. Fast and angry, with the occasional metallic flourish, MORAL PANIC put me in mind of an Australian POISON IDEA. I can only imagine what they must have been capable of after a couple of weeks practice! (AM)
(Heinous Fuck)

NAKED LIGHTS – "On Nature" LP

If MANSION were not a wall of noise or if STEELY DAN played mathy post-punk then this would be it. There is a cool guitar riff here and there, and at some point there is some saxophone skronk that makes it sound kinda free funk, but in the end everything is extremely clean and trained. This band sounds professional. They sound like formally trained gear heads. They're doing kind of weird things, but in the most boring and calculated way possible. (MM)
(Castle Face)

NATCHNIONY TRAKTOR – "Huta Siechnica" EP

This Polish punk rarity is part of two vinyl installments of this band's recordings from the mid to late '80s now available for the first time as tangible releases. It seems that Polish bands under the Communist regime either had to go to great lengths to self-release their material (as outlined by DEZERTER in a previous issue of this magazine) or veil their politics with opaque and nonsensical lyrics. Thus a band like NATCHNIONY TRAKTOR, with anti-regime lyrics and an inaccessible hardcore sound, was never able to release their music. Luckily, their songs were documented in live recordings from the period, which also means that the quality is somewhat rough. I am surprised by how this absorbs facets of '80s global hardcore from all corners. I hear bits of DISCHARGE, MOB 47, VOID, and GAUZE reassembled with Polish lyrics. I like their other EP, released in 2014, a little better but both are cool artifacts, and I think fans of '80s hardcore, and Polish punk nerds in general, will definitely appreciate this. (LT)
(Antena Krzyku)

NAVE NODRIZA / SRASRSRA – split EP

Modern garage trash punk from Spain. NAVE NODRIZA is catchy but just sorta blah. PLEASURE FUCKERS and VICIOUS similarities. SRASRSRA is much better, noisier, and meaner. A primitive two-man group that's a cross between the TROGGS, SUICIDE, and R.I.P. Good shit. (RO)
(John Colby Sect)

NIGHT LIVES – "Divider" CD

This Finnish four-piece's EP is four songs in twenty minutes with a pained, melancholy vibe. Bass-led, tom-heavy, slow, swinging build-ups give way to driving, raging parts, though the shouted vocals are stable throughout. There's a quiet, quasi-acoustic interlude, as I've come to expect with this style. Overall, these songs are catchy and well-executed. Even the longer ones mostly held my interest. At their worst, they're a little sappy and overwrought, as is the danger with this approach, and the last half of their epic closer doesn't work as well as the rest of the disc. Produced by Mass Giorgini, the sound is full and warm, pro and polished, but not too much so—actually, great. While not flawless, this is a strong release. (JM)
(self-released)

NO TAG – "Oi Oi Oi" 12"

Radio Raheem have done us another great public service by reissuing this amazing slab of New Zealand punk. I don't

know what is in the water down there, but Australia and New Zealand have produced far more than their fair share of influential sounds. Before we even get to the music, look at that fucking cover. How hard does it get? Of course, despite the cover and title, it's not actually Oi!, just brash, snotty, tuneful punk that could hold its own against any classic punk single you care to mention (and in fact it was a top 20 hit in 1982), so any Fred Perry Sales Rack Firm that picks it up shouldn't be too disappointed. (AM)
(Radio Raheem)

NOT MOVING – "Flash On You" CD

This is a rerelease of this Italian band I never heard of's 1988 record. Starts off with a cover of the '70s hit "Drivers Seat." Not looking good. Two of them are going for that junky STONES look, the others look like waiters, and the album is dedicated to the *Native American Indians*?!? Choke me with piping hot linguini...this sucks. The singer gets some nice PATTI SMITH moments as they try for a druggy '70s rock thing with mystical overtones, but this is about as spiritual as STEVIE NICKS with a nose full of blow. (RO)
(Area Pirata)

THE NUCLEAR FAMILY – "Urge" EP

Late-era METALLICA playing THIN LIZZY with some hardcore and '90s grunge pop thrown in. This is possibly the type of thing that could maybe sound weird and scary, but the lyrics suck and they keep shoving in these parts that sound like they are trying so hard to be angry and wild, and the production is huge and pro. The guitar tone is cheesy, the drums sound awful. Even the freaky saxophone solo can't save this. (MM)
(Urge / Virgin Spring)

NYC MAYHEM – "For Real!" LP

Before the legendary STRAIGHT AHEAD was born, there existed a lil' band called NYC MAYHEM that would form the core of the group that would go on spread the *spirit of youth*. In their brief existence, NYC MAYHEM recorded a practice tape, a demo, and an ill-fated 7". The practice tape and the first demo, both from early to mid 1985, show a band focused on crafting a crude, charming, raw and blackened thrash metal thing. But something happened between mid June of '85 and the end of that same year, because that's when the unreleased-until-now *For Real!* 7" was written and recorded. This session shows a more familiar thrashing hardcore sound, packed full of blast beats, Tommy Carroll's distinct howl, and plenty of youthful, slam-dancing fury. A necessary purchase. (JU)
(Radio Raheem)

DD OWEN – "Plane" EP

"Plane" scores on every level: a classy sleeve encasing a red-hot EP, three tunes, all complete works, all top-tier. Though obviously still drawing on frustration as the key motivator, DD OWEN shows more patience and focus here than on the slime-flinging tantrums rattled off by SICK THOUGHTS. All the expected screaming is replaced by direct, methodical vocals, urging along tightly composed punk that'll stab its way into your brain. Killer. (MC)
(Ken Rock)

PATSY – "Eat It/Insidious Kind"

It's a Total Punk 7" from members of MYSTIC INANE. That sentence alone should sell you this record. It reminds me of the faster and less melodic tracks from the ADOLESCENTS, pounding through nonstop with simple LA hardcore riffs and slamming pogo beats. I like the repetitive, nasal drawl of the over and over again "*eat it eat it eat it*," but I'm kind of torn between loving the relentless repetition in these songs and being disappointed with their basic nature. The double-tracked guitar solo on "Eat It" is particularly mesmerizing, and I keep playing the track over and over just to hear it. The record rips, but I think their other single on Total Punk had more memorable songs and better artwork. (BW)
(Total Punk)

PERVERTS AGAIN – "Our Big Party" LP

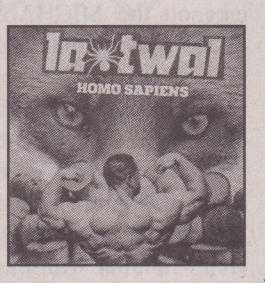
This does sound kind of perverted. The vocals resemble someone making an obscene phone call (Do those happen anymore?). The lyrics aren't exactly poetry, but if they weren't printed on the back cover I probably wouldn't notice, though there is a song that starts out saying "*Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit. Shit.*" The music trudges along stompingly. It's dirty, distorted, and pounding. That sounds cool. This is just weird enough to border on brilliant. Maybe after a few more listens. (CK)
(Noncommercial)

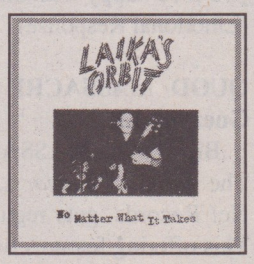
PHYLUMS – "Decisions/Vexed" EP

Phonetically speaking, I believe the band name is supposed to be pronounced "Phlegms." Yes, PHYLUMS is great and all that, poppy cool guy that wears sunglasses at night music that isn't actually all that good. But the point in all of this is that PHYLUMS have some unfortunate friends who play horned instruments, and rather than exclude them from the festivities, they went ahead and invited these unfortunate friends to transform their rare brand of hip contemporary tunes into hornrock, the cardinal sin of all rock music. (GB)
(Dusty Medical)

PORNO CASSETTES – "Your Face, A Fucking Disgrace/Dead End Yobs"

Rare reissue of giga-rare 1982 UK Oi! street punk killer. If I remember correctly, this UK band's one and only record was only ever pressed in France in a tiny edition of, like, 50 or 100 copies. Most collectors I know didn't even hear of it until the mid '00s, but





unlike most late term discoveries, this one proved to be quite a punk rock bonzer, and real rough streetpunk at that. In my opinion, much obscure Oi! of the era can get dull and plodding, but this shit rips, a true two-sider! And what a sleeve! Glad to see Radio Raheem keeps bringin' the hits. (GB)
(Radio Raheem)

PRETTY HURTS – "Expectations" EP

Cold, dark post-hardcore from the icy wastelands of Berlin. PRETTY HURTS distill the DC "revolution summer" influences of, say, ICEAGE into four spare, frenetic bursts of reverb-soaked anxiety. Took me a couple of listens to get into it, but I'd say it's a keeper. (AM)
(Erste Theke Tonträger / Grave Imprint)

PRIMITIVE CALCULATORS – "I'm Fucked/Bad"

They're forty years older than when they started, but the PRIMITIVE CALCULATORS keep it harsh and uncompromising. The A-side sounds like classic Wax Trax!, like FRONT 242—a thumping beat with synth sounds you could easily use for a car alarm. The B-side, "Bad," is admirably inaccessible and uncomfortable and feels like it might be a No Wave piss-take on the MICHAEL JACKSON song of the same name. The synth line tries to groove like SUICIDE but gets buried under antagonizing noise. Unfortunately, the vocal delivery on this new stuff doesn't bring the heat, and the lyrics go for ugly nihilism but come off kind of embarrassing (*"I'm bad / I'm bad / I'm super fucking bad"*). If you aren't familiar with the band, try the early stuff, but if you're already a fan, I'm sure you'll be happy with this. (BW)
(Emotional Response)

QUOD MASSACRE – "V Zmajevem Gnezdu" LP

Big QUOD MASSACRE fan over here. The *Kje Je Odgovor* LP, also released by Ne! Records, gets regular play in my life. This offering features two different live sets from 1984. While I am pleased to hear some songs I've never heard before, the playing and sound quality don't really do them justice. QUOD MASSACRE's penchant for strong melodies and power at a galloping pace doesn't come through here like it does on the previously released studio material. They do have some truly amazing songs. I realize that rough recordings have their place, and I'm not saying that these kinds of recordings shouldn't be well documented—They should be! I know the Ne! Records wouldn't have dumped all of the energy and money into this deluxe package if it weren't important, but I would distinguish this release as necessary for completists only. (MA)
(Ne!)

RAKTA EM TRANSE – "Estreito Engano" EP

I like the concept of this recording. While I tend to think of collaborations as a way for commercial artists to sell more records, this is actually a really cool idea. It more or less sounds exactly how you'd expect: an amalgamation of RAKTA and CADAVER EM TRANSE, two of São Paulo's post-punk powerhouses. There is, however, more emphasis on experimentation here than in either of the bands' respective efforts. Discernable RAKTA characteristics include the jammy repetitive song structure and characteristic organ sound, while CADAVER EM TRANSE leaves its mark with a more driving KILLING JOKE style. At times things get a bit chaotic, generating a sense of aural claustrophobia, like in "Anonimato," but in the case of "Apenas Mais Um," my favorite track, all the elements work together beautifully: a good riff and dual vocals layered over interesting rhythms that build up in tension that releases at the end. You could listen to this record a hundred times and discover something new on each rotation. Interesting, complex, and worth picking up, especially if you love either of these bands. (LT)
(Dama da Noite / Nada Nada)

REST IN PISS – "Baptised In Beer" EP

I mean, the band mentions their own affinity for SKITKIDS and ANNIHILATION TIME right out of the gate and, as comparisons go, I'd say that's a pretty good place to start. Take out some of the leads, and make the guitars a little thicker and you'd have a sweet ass D-beat record…but why would you want to do that?! The overall sound is perhaps a touch thin, but that helps to give it a serious rock 'n' roll bent, something these kids are clearly not upset about. Full throttle and maximum energy. (WN)
(Vituiks Meni)

RUNNING – "Wake Up Applauding" LP

Fuzzed-out psych punk outta Chicago that comes off just sort of weird and not always "there." This lives that oddball area of Ty Segall's FUZZ and in the downer/bummer times it's like BRAINBOMBS sans the creepoid serial killer vibe. Lots of tweaked-out vocals, wah pedal, and likely lots of flailing hair and big amps. Oh, *now* they remind me of the old Oakland band LIQUORBALL mixed with HELIOS CREED. Granted, it's not the best trip you'll get but seems like they would be more interesting live. I really hope they ditch the generic band name, too. (JD)
(Castle Face)

SA90 – "Johnny on the Phone" LP

I want to like this, I really do, but it's just not doing it for me. I mean, it's good, but I want it to be great. Some songs are definitely more hit than miss. I don't know why, but the record makes me think of SHOCKING BLUE. I'd rather be thinking about VICE SQUAD or the GOGOS. (KK)
(Screwball Productions)

JAROMIL SABOR – "III" LP

Frenchman JAROMIL SABOR plays jangly, pleasant sounding indie-garage. You know the kind. It's warm and fuzzy with a few occasional rock-outs. A couple of the songs are orchestral with lush melodies. Those are more interesting, but overall this is a record to put on when you want to fall asleep. (CK)
(Frantic City)

SCANNER – "Splat" CD

From the CD notes, this is an East Coast band that dates back to 1979 whose influences are not only punk but also surf, '50s rock, '60s hard rock, and glam. All I'm hearing on this particular release is punky pop metal. Maybe UGLY KID JOE or metal-era ALICE COOPER without ALICE's vocals and with tongue-in-cheek lyrics. Even the covers of "Running Riot" and "Suffragette City" have this sound. I realize older punks learn how to play over time, but I'm just not feeling it here. (RL)
(Scanner)

SHARK TOYS / UV-TV – split EP

SHARK TOYS play frantic but goofy *Messthetics* herk'n'jerk, with angular guitar scraw and off-kilter rhythmic assertations with a wild keyboard warble. This will make you wanna wear a thrift store suit and an anorak. UV-TV are the winners of this split. They had a killer, killer demo I couldn't stop listening to, reminiscent of the punker end of the SHOP ASSISTANTS ideal, that dreamy but blown apart sound that evokes the RAMONES, the RONETTES and the

JESUS AND MARY CHAIN... Meaning actual perfect pop/punk with a vocalist that captures the coolest "Throw Aggi Off the Bridge" style... The songs on this 45 are way faster/more charged than the demo versions. You gotta get this! (LG)
(Emotional Response)

SIDETRACKED – "Opposition" EP

SIDETRACK offer up twelve powerviolence vignettes on one big-holed 7" that spares no amount of ferocity in its aversion for time. Most of the songs on classic records like *No Man's Slave* even have a verse-chorus-verse motif, but its pretty sick to hear a song condensed to its most basic structure. Some of the songs even read like objectivist poetry. I make the *No Man's Slave* comparison because the vocalist barks like Mr. Denunzio himself. It's brutal, to the point, and grim. If you're already a fan of this stuff, this record is for you. If not, check out NO COMMENT, CROSSED OUT, and INFEST first. For fans of: Fun Dip, Vision Street Wear, working off credit card debt. (MW)
(Rotten to the Core)

THE SLOW POISONER – "Midnite Earwig Buffet/Voices Green & Purple"

This is weirdo indie-rock. The music has a circus feel to it and the vocals have an annoying big top barker quality. It yells "Pay attention to me!" Fortunately, each song is pretty short. (CK)
(Rocktopus!)

SNITCH A SNATCH – "Speed Birth" EP

Speedy, eclectic hardcore from Germany that has too much going on to be really focused or memorable. Flitting from melodic punk riffs to blast-beat breakdowns to hardcore-era BEASTIE BOYS yelps, usually all in the same song and so disjointed that this sounds more like a 30-track EP than an 8-song platter. The bass player's got some sweet licks, though. (AU)
(Huge Major Label)

SODA – "Without A Head" 12" EP

We had a houseguest at the compound who wore a SODA t-shirt for four days straight. I asked him if he could help me out with this review, and the only word he could give me was "juice." I'll take it. SODA is a newer Gainesville band featuring at least one person from AMERICAN SNAKESKIN. The male vocalist usually sings in a grouchy and agitated register. On more mellow moments, the vocals remind me of GUN OUTFIT before they all set out for the pilgrimage to Joshua Tree. The two singers often lock into unison; most of the lyrics are based in the aesthetic of the trash transcendental and whatever it is that happens when you look at things too closely in Florida. It begs for repeated listens. The drummer lays out some great patterns. "Janie Juicehead" has a sick Riot-City-single-on-33 vibe; "New Trash" sounds like taking dissociatives and wandering into a late night show at the Batcave. I am even willing to issue SODA an exemption from the chorus pedal buyback program—"T.V." puts the effect to good use, creating an ocean of guitar noise before stepping into a woozy melody that reminds me a little bit of BROKEN WATER. There aren't a lot of bands doing this mid-'80s $5-bin sound a la LIVE SKULL or the LORRIES so well at the moment in the US. Some groups might take one or two of these elements and try to ride out a couple of songs to three or four LPs; SODA mix it up enough on this first 12" to keep me wanting more. (EW)
(Dull Tools)

SODA BOYS – "Burgers & Fries/Doghouse"

I was prepared to call this a stinker on account of most bands with "soda" in their names are crummy power pop bands from LA, but this ain't that, and I'm glad. Good, dumb punk like the GIZMOS or PENETRATORS. Just two songs, and I'm glad, because if a band does any more than that they tend to stink and this don't stink and that's the only good news I ever heard in my life. (BB)
(Total Punk)

SPIT – "Poison In Your Head" LP

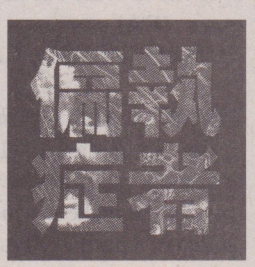
Super high-energy hardcore out of Israel that draws heavily from MINOR THREAT, 7 SECONDS (you can definitely hear *The Crew* in the drumming), and UNIFORM CHOICE, but also has a good deal of late '80s hardcore-gone-rock creative dissonance mixed in with the hyperspeed and sing-songy vocals, which ends up defining the sound far more than the handful of FIRST STEP-type youth crew tracks. Despite being an eighteen-song LP of short songs, I don't get bored, and am not expecting a cohesive album with this kind of thing. This LP was also produced by J Robbins from GOVERNMENT ISSUE, JAWBOX, etc. and you can hear it. (DG)
(Rotten To The Core)

STOP BREATHING – "V" LP

These SoCal dudes have been around awhile, to judge by this. They wonder if today's youth can truly be down when the internet is so easy, not like when we were kids...They do an accessible hardcore thing with clear rough vocals and a pro sound. There are little changes throughout the songs, like they've refined and polished the material. The tracks are mostly quick and tight, though they err when they get away from this formula. "Keep Gunning" and "Sing Along" are more bouncy and mid-tempo—these songs are terrible. The rest of it is competent but not exciting. The lyrics are largely in the "you can't stop us / fight for change" vein, sadly lacking in specifics. The impression I get is a band for clean-cut kids and "real" clubs. (JM)
(Burning Tree / Rotten to the Core)

STYRENES – "CLE 76-79 Unreleased" 3x7" box set

The STYRENES are the least historically regarded



of the holy trinity CLE bands that revolved around the proto-punk mutant crew of Marotta/Klimek/Morton/etc. that birthed punk rock in the '70s Midwest, the other branches being the ELECTRIC EELS and the MIRRORS. The STYRENES are slotted as the artiest of these outfits, what with their occasional jazzy time signatures, melodic vocals, front-and-center keyboards, and dedication to abstract lyrics. While the EELS may be the rampaging "id" of that scene, I've always heard the STYRENES as the counterpoint to PERE UBU. Certainly anyone who can't stand Thomas' squawking vocals can find refuge in the STYRENES intelligent exercises in Eno/Ayers/krautrock infused '70s psych rock. And anyone who is already a convert is going to have to pick this box up for all the unreleased shit. That's right, it's not material from the pricey triple 10" from the '90s on Scat Records, or the *It's Artastic* CD comp. Audio fidelity is strong, there's a booklet enclosed, and some copies are on clear vinyl, so it becomes one of those essential packages you just have to shell out for or else suffer from extreme *fomo*. (RW)
(My Mind's Eye)

SUSPICIOUS BEASTS – "Might Die Tomorrow" LP

This is pretty wussy. Japanese band SUSPICIOUS BEASTS play jangly pop rock. It has a '60s sound with an emphasis on folkiness. There are acoustic guitars and harmonies. Some freaky guitar solos are thrown in near the end of the record. It reminds me too much of San Francisco in the '60s for my taste. Attention Deadheads. (CK)
(Alien Snatch!)

SVALBARD – "One Day All This Will End" LP

If this is modern crust, you can count me out. This is some clean-cut assed shit. I guess you can compare them to TRAGEDY, and maybe some NEUROSIS, but there are also way too many MOGWAI and screamo vibes going on here. This does not rip, nor does it shred. It's ethereal indie crust rock. I would recommend this to people who want to listen to crust but don't like harsh or raw music. (BA)
(Halo of Flies / Holy Roar / Through Love)

THINK I CARE – "Singles Collection" LP

For my money, THINK I CARE begins and ends with the two EPs (and misc. tracks) that make up this collection. Regular ass Boston hardcore that was riding as much of the muscular X-Claim! horse as it was CROSSED OUT and the early PV sound. Pure brutality and a modern classic. Pick this up if you don't have the two 7"s. (JU)
(Painkiller)

TOTAL ABUSE – "Excluded" LP

Imagine CONDOMINIUM as knuckle dragging hardcore, or you could say TOTAL ABUSE is a band to be filed near SEX VID. Their output almost attempts to exist within basic hardcore structures but then wanders off into sloppy heavy metal guitar solos or holds repetitions far beyond what is comfortable or even just dipping into walls of white noise and feedback. This band is macho in this deeply self-hating way, a gnawing sense of being a piece of shit. It doesn't feel like bragging or even self-deprecation but just catharsis in hating oneself. A solid TOTAL ABUSE record. (MM)
(Deranged)

TOTALT JAVLA MÖRKER – "Helvetespunk" EP

Blackened Swedish kång emulating HUMAN WASTE, SKITSYSTEM, ACURSED et al. Harsh, militant, and cold riffs with gang vocals that break down quite often into abysmal blasts and dirgy plodding. Otherwise, this EP is short, fast, and foaming at the bit with kvlt crust introversion. A genuine mix of Swedish death metal in structure and hardcore punk in execution. None-more-black cover art with embossed lettering, sparing no expense. Lyrics provided in Swedish and English. Message provided by four tracks: "Inferno," "Paranoia," "Hate," and "Death." Not for your bobble-head party. (JR)
(D-Takt & Råpunk)

TV SLIME – "Flying Fuck" EP

This starts with a hardcore VERBAL ABUSE / NECROS thumper then goes into some more mid-paced EFFIGIES-sounding material. A snotty singer and a band not afraid of noise make this Chicago band's debut a winner. (RO)
(self-released)

LA TWAL – "Eat Your Fur/Homosapiens"

This is techno with a hard edge. I guess that gives it a punkishness. Female vocals over a pounding drum machine beat with an occasional guitar squawk. It's catchy enough if you want to dance. (CK)
(Acontrario / Maloka / Rudy's Back)

LA TWAL – "Shtil Di Nakht/FNB" EP

Super weird anti-fascist dub that features enough random electronic sounds and samples that it almost teeters on the edge of trip hop. Also, there is what I think maybe is a lute solo? This is the kind of thing that I'm so baffled by that I can't tell if I like it or if I am just morbidly fascinated. Second side is like a slow, glitchless ATARI TEENAGE RIOT. If nothing else, this music is deeply unique. It comes with a booklet that, from what I can gather (it's all in French), is about the history of Jewish resistance in French ghettos during WWII. All together, a very interesting record. (MM)
(Acontrario / Maloka / Rudy's Back)

THE TWO TENS – "Volume" CD

To quote the best song on this CD: "*I don't care at all*." This is recorded slickly to the point that any interesting parts are so covered with gloss it is hard to look at them. The TWO TENS are a two-piece rock band from Los Angeles. Their music is catchy rock with a huge emphasis on pop. It seems as if they spent too much time listening to Top 40 radio and not enough time listening to *Nuggets*. Maybe they need some time out of La-La Land. Whatever it is, this needs more of an edge. (CK)
(Ugly Sugar)

UDÜSIC – "Revised" EP

This hardcore is sort of hard to describe. Their sound is guitar-driven with a capital G, but their sound also owes a lot to the unexpected breaks and rhythms. There's a sort of ease that comes off in the playing that gives the EP a unique groove. Only a few hooks, though. Sarah's vocals sit in the middle of the mix, sort of in between all the riffage, but sometimes I wish they were more up front. The first and last tracks feel strongest to me. Pretty interesting stuff. (MA)
(Painkiller)

¡VAMANOS! – "A Ten Inch at 45 RPMs" 10"

Mostly solid garage-fuzzoid, "maximal minimalist" duo from NYC (by way of Detroit and Phoenix). A few reference points I thought of right away are MUDHONEY and the SONICS with an apocalyptic prepper's worth of pedals. "Neck Tie" is a super catchy number. The final track on Side A oddly reminds me of the PAGANS gone '70s garage rock. OK, Mike Hudson and co. hinted at this sound at times, but this ain't about them, so put your eyes of Satan back onto ¡VAMANOS! The dual vocals

on "Dreamin'" are ace, too. The rest of this tears it up rather well. (JD)
(King Pizza)

DICK VENOM & THE TERRORTONES – "Snakeoil For Snakes" LP

These English blokes and blokette play a fine version of CRAMPS / MAD DADDYS / DEMENTED ARE GO style rockabilly B-movie surf punk. The singer can really make or break this template, and this guy has all the right LUX INTERIOR vocal inflections. Unfortunately (or fortunately), in this day and age, I don't find myself listening to this style of music, but if I did, the TERRORTONES would do just fine. Not bringing much new to a plate that doesn't respect much deviation in general. (RO)
(Jailhouse Morgue)

WAVELESS – "Spirit Island" 12"

I feel like this band's name is comically appropriate. WAVELESS is dripping in space, reverb, and a little delay. I swear it's like they recorded this right after some "beach pop" band and no one turned the knobs at all. Their songs are hazy shoegaze jammers with plenty of parts, lots of loud/quiet changes, a serious focus on texture, and some true stoned-to-the-bone vibes. I'm tempted to be very vague about what this record/band/songs sound like because this record is perhaps best when not closely listened to. There are so many elements that make this record very pleasing from a textural standpoint: the delicate layering of guitars, some light and tinkling, some huge and soaring; the deep echoing of reverb and delay that completely engorges the record; the constantly layered vocals. Everything in the process of recording these songs seems determined to add depth to the sound. The songwriting isn't bad, but like a lot of shoegaze, it's a little meandering and aimless. Here it works where others fail, as the listlessness of the songs is well matched by everything else in their aesthetic. This is pretty modern shoegaze, similar to bands like WHIRR but not as bombastic and much more interesting. This would be great to space out and read to. (LP)
(Deranged)

WETBRAIN – LP

Cleveland punk shitz makes its way to the review bin over a year late. Fitting? Anyway, DARVOCETS and CIDER fans have already purchased, ingested, and shat this pup out, but us casual followers may have been on the fence. Allow me to confirm that WETBRAIN's brand of piss-in-yr-icetray HC punk is exactly as wild and wasted as you want it to be. As a recovering asshole, I have little use for such muck, but they're making a pretty damn good case for their speedy debauchery. Perhaps I'll get fatter and break shit in solidarity? Yeah, done deal. No thinking caps necessary, no ma'am! (MC)
(Painkiller)

WHORE PAINT – "Ultra Sound" CD

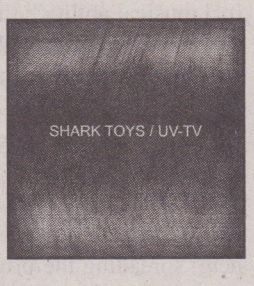
The last time I saw WHORE PAINT was in a dusty warehouse in Providence, RI, playing to a crowd that was almost half their age. When the band announced that they would be taking a hiatus, the entire room screamed their disapproval. Scream no more, because now that they've worked on some other projects and introduced a tiny human into the world, they are back. They build off of their self-described "riff rock/No Wave/crooner shred hybrid" and transcend into a different realm here. Reba's vocals aren't as upfront as before, but they blend more into the music creating their own separate ethereal instrumentation sometimes reminding me of BJÖRK (no, really). Guitarist Hilary still shreds through otherworldly rock riffs like there's no tomorrow, but she tempers them with booming low-end destruction that vaguely recalls some of the somber moments of the BODY, especially in the epic numbers of "This Quiet" and "Held." Their drummer, Meredith, is going off in ways I've never heard, with sprawling, manic drum rolls and tight reggaeton-style beats. The band gels together in a way that I wasn't expecting and is so hard to explain, but this album is so, so good. It's always exciting to see a band grow and evolve like this. (GH)
(Translation Loss)

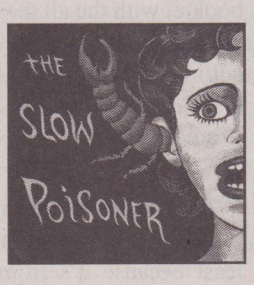
WITCHFACE – "Alt Gaar I Svart" EP

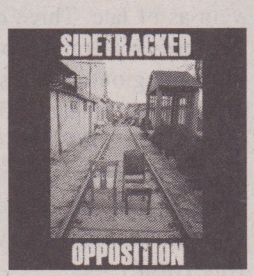
Blown out, super lo-fi blackened Norwegian HC that seems like an attempt to merge the aesthetics and ideals of BLACK FLAG and VENOM through the lens of BONE AWL. It has a real focused aesthetic and sound that seem like one man's vision. Turns out it only takes one guy to really nail the Mysterious Guy Hardcore flail. (LG)
(Ken Rock)

V/A – "Back To Cleveland: WCSB Horsepower Rare Punk Rock" LP

From the home of the mighty PAGANS, DEAD BOYS and GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS comes this kickass comp of known and who-the-fuck bands taped for WCSB's Horsepower radio show between '94 and '03. I recognized the TKO'S, TEENAGE KNOCKOUTS, MORMONS, and NINE SHOCKS TERROR, but this is butt ass full of great tunes by unknowns as well. It's really fucking annoying that there's no track list except for the round label that keeps spinning as I try to read it. Just imagine a really great mixtape where you listen happily not knowing who is who and discovering lifelong favorites by SPASMS, NEGATIVE AGGRESSION, the CANCELLED, and HAUNTED HEAD in the process. This leans more on the trashed-out PAGANS rock'n'roll stylings back when that music was raw and dangerous before the internet ruined everything, but you get hardcore ragers like SLAK and beatnik poetry jazz jams by BROTHER WAYNE KRAMER to mix it up and make it a fine ride down Interstate 80. (RO)
(RT956)







V/A – "Charred Remains" 2xLP

This record came out a little over a year ago, I guess it was sent to *MRR* via surface mail? Well, better reviewed late than never... Assembled by Bob Moore of *Noise* fanzine and originally released on cassette in early 1982, *Charred Remains* was one of the very first compilations to document the exploding North American hardcore scene. Much of the material is culled from early demo recordings of groups that would later do proper records—ARTICLES OF FAITH, SIN 34, VIOLENT APATHY, DOUBLE-O, PERSONALITY CRISIS and the MISGUIDED, to name a few. Moore was inspired by the "non-discriminatory and inclusive" approach on Crass Records' *Bullshit Detector* LP and recalls, "if your band had something to say, you were included on the compilation, regardless of sound quality [or] musical ability"; this policy, along with the fact that most of the participants were still honing their abilities, means *Charred Remains* drags at times, particularly the four REBEL TRUTH songs—woof! Still, it's an interesting artifact, the VOID and DIE KREUZEN tracks are crushing (duh), and Radio Raheem has done a solid reissue job here, spreading the original 60-minute tape across four LP sides and including a 24-page booklet with the all the original content plus updated liner notes. Let's hope we see vinyl editions of *Meathouse*, *America's Dairyland*, and *Code Blue* next! (CS)
(Radio Raheem)

V/A – "Noise Pollution" EP

A surprisingly strong four-song EP, not least because it's from Canada which has been kind of quiet in the trashy-garage-punk vein as of late. Three of the four bands on here are excellent, the one exception playing a plodding outfit that is fronting a dead-on-arrival sort of late '90s TKO Records (?) sound. GET OFF THE COP takes the brass ring with their spastic screaming-garage qranting, and should be given several more opportunities to "achieve vinyl". (RW)
(It's Trash!)

V/A – "Orbán Népe" LP

According to this slick new compilation, hardcore punk is alive and well in Hungary. NORMS kick it all off with four tense and grungy hardcore tracks. Folks already familiar with RAKOSI's previous EPs on Lengua Armada already know to expect ferocious songs, most of which barely reach forty seconds. DISKOBRA is greatly informed by DISCHARGE (as you may have guessed) but come off a bit more unhinged. YOUTH VIOLENCE wrap it all up with five gnarly and horrid blasts of powerviolence-tinged hardcore. Each band offers one cover of an old Hungarian band in their set. The material is all top-notch, well produced, and the layout has English translations. (MA)
(Permaculture)

V/A – "SUB" 2xLP

This legendary Brazilian punk and hardcore compilation has had many afterlives, but the latest edition offers a significant revelation. The recording for the original release was actually done twice, and here we get both recordings, hence the double LP format. There is an explanation on the insert in Portuguese, so I will give a brief summary here: The story goes that Redson from CÓLERA, who coordinated and released *SUB* in 1983, didn't like the first recording, so the four bands (CÓLERA, RATOS DE PORÃO, FOGO CRUZADO, PSYKÓZE) recorded again. Redson gave the tapes of the rejected recording to the drummer of PSYKÓZE for safe keeping, who handed them off to someone from OLHO SECO in 1995. Nobody knew what was on the tapes, and in 2008, a concerted effort began to preserve their contents before they were reduced to mold and dust. Once digitized, it was revealed that the tapes contained the other recording of *SUB*, with four alternate tracks (three from RATOS DE PORÃO and one from PSYKÓZE), which are heard here for the first time since they were recorded over 30 years ago. Well packaged and meticulously thought out, this release took a multigenerational effort and a little luck. It's crucial listening for anyone who wants to be familiar with foundational international punk, and Brazilian punk nerds will want to pick this up. (LT)
(Nada Nada / Spicoli)

V/A – "Under the Covers with Satan" LP

This record feels like the soundtrack to an as-of-yet unreleased sequel to *Detroit Rock City* except without any of the well-known stars. Also, I've watched that movie at least 30 times and I'll probably only listen to this record once. It's not because any of the bands are *bad*, but because it's kinda hard to hear ten different versions of the SHRINE cover everything from SLAYER to MÖTLEY CRÜE to the SONICS. That's just it, too—I don't wanna hear a '70s rock rehash band (the THORNES, in this case) covering one of the most brutal bands of all time, or a lo-fi burger records outfit (DECLINERS) cover the CRÜE. LEXXI VEXX's cover of the PAGANS' "Eyes of Satan" is probably the standout in that it is a pretty impassioned rendition of a classic track. (I immediately listened to the original afterward, though.) I feel like the Indiegogo money used to make this record a reality would have been better suited to releasing a comp of all these bands' original tracks. For fans of: smoking cigs under the benches at your middle school's football field, scratching your dad's KISS *Best of...* CD by accident, dates at the mall. (MW)
(Volume Bomb)

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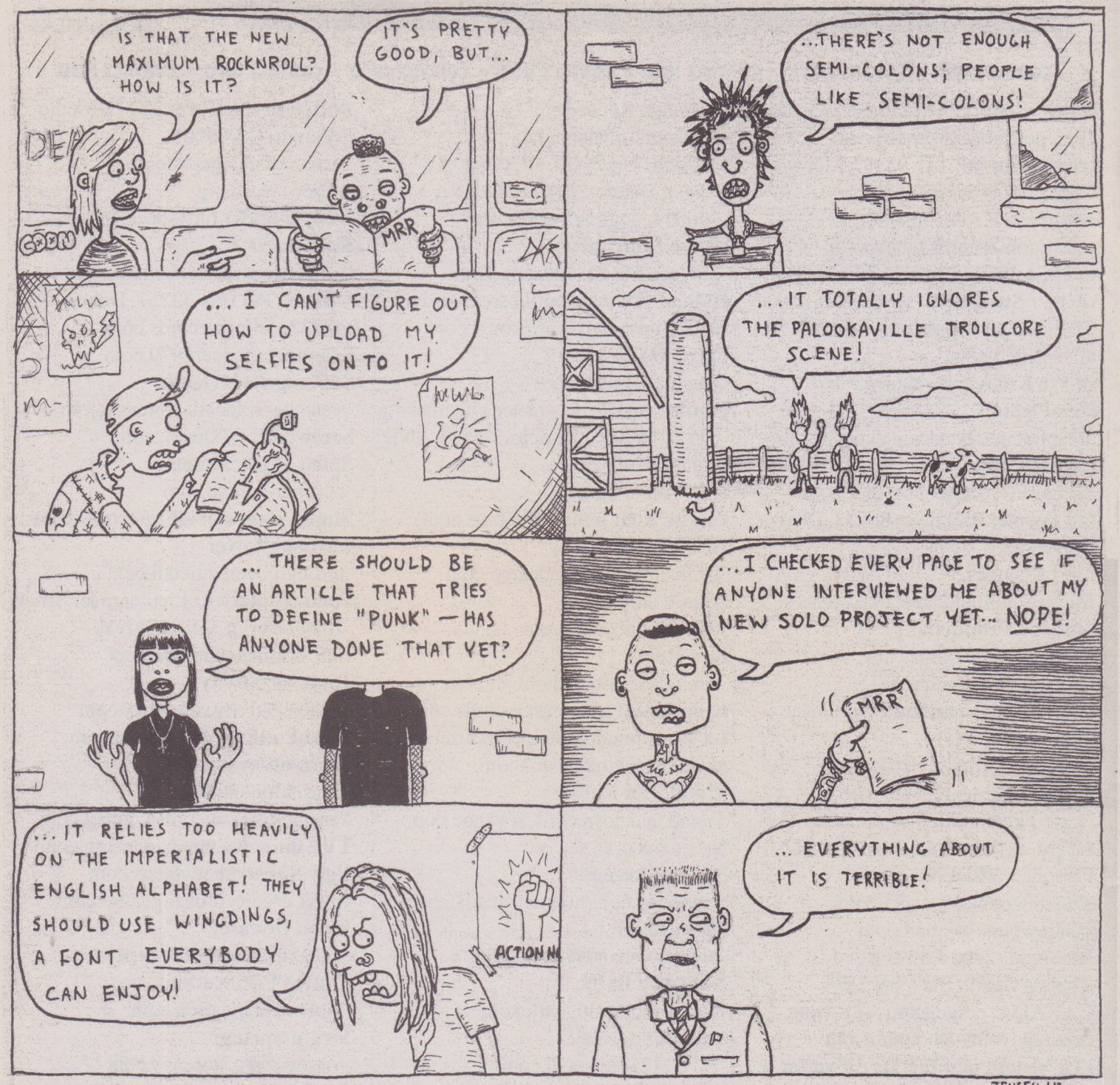
IFB: ifbrecords.com
In The Red: intheredrecords.com
It's Trash!: itstrashrecords.bandcamp.com
John Colby Sect: thejohncolbysect.com
Ken Rock: kenrocksplastic@hotmail.com
King Pizza: kingpizzarecords.com
La Rosa: modernkicks.bigcartel.com
Maloka: malokadistro.com
Mundo En Kaos: mundoenkaosrecords@yahoo.com
Ne!: nerecords.se
Neutral Accents: facebook.com/neutralaccentsfanzine
Night Lives: nightlivesband@gmail.com
Nobody's Baby: nobodysbaby.bigcartel.com
Noncommercial: NTC11213@gmail.com
Painkiller: 7 Meacham Road, Cambridge, MA 02140, painkillerrecords.com
Permaculture: dvoracsko@yahoo.com
PWVA: hooligancrooners.bandcamp.com
Radio Raheem: radioraheemrecords.com
Realicide Youth: realicide.com
Rocktopus!: Andrew Goldfarb, 1593 McAllister St, #206, San Francisco, CA 94115, ognerstump.com
Rotten to the Core: 217 El Medio, Ventura, CA 93001, rtcrecords.blogspot.com
RT956: wcsb.org
Rudy's Back: rudysback.free.fr
Rum Bar: rumbarrecords.bandcamp.com
Salinas: PO Box 32257, Detroit, MI 48232, salinasrecords.com
Scanner: scanner1979.com
Scavenger Of Death: scavengerofdeath.storenvy,com
Screwball: sa90punk.com
Spirit of the Streets: berliner-weisse.com
Stupid Bag: stupidbagrecords.com
Through Love: throughloverec.tictail.com
Tomatenplatten: Lichtenrader Str. 44, 10249 Berlin, GERMANY, info@tomatenplatten.com
Total Negativity: totalnegativity.storeenvy.com
Total Punk: floridasdying.com
Translation Loss: Translationloss.com translationlossrecords@gmail.com
TV Slime: tvslime.bandcamp.com
Ugly Sugar: thetwotens.com
Urge: urgerecords.bigcartel.com
Video Disease: videodiseaserecords.com
Violent Pacification: violentpacification.com
Virgin Spring: virginspring.storenvy.com
Vituiksmeni: vituiksmenirecords.blogspot.com, vituiksmenirecords@gmail.com
Volume Bomb: volumebomb.com
Wallaby Beat: wallabybeat.blogspot.com
Warthog Speak: warthogspeak.com
White Russian: whiterussianrecords.com



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(PUBLICATION NOT GUARANTEED)

DEMOS

Send cassettes and CD-Rs to: MRR Attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. CD-Rs with no artwork will not be considered. Reviews by Matt Badenhop, Heather Blotto, Robert Collins, Michael de Toffoli, Greg Harvester, Ricky Martyr, Sean Nieves-Quiñones, and Jason Ryan.

ANCHOR THIEVES – *Monolith* – The only thing appealing to my ears was the crunchy guitar. So I listened with open ears, and I just heard indie rock. I guess it's been long enough since WEEZER that we are gonna start hearing that stuff again, huh? Bummer. (Robert) (10-song CD-R, lyrics included, anchorthieves.bandcamp.com)

ANTIFACES – Fast and melodic and *great* punk from Miami, Florida. Their songs have elements of both hardcore and pop, but ANTIFACES are ultimately neither. They often take an already snappy tempo and suddenly shift up a gear to make it even faster, effectively ruling every time. A dude and lady share the vocal duties, both sound awesome, the basslines are sick, and it's all in Spanish. Bouncy, catchy dissent in the form of nine punk anthems. Think Latino punk by way of Spain, like PELIGRO SOCIAL. If you're digging stuff in LA like TOZCOS, FUMIGADOS, or SADICOS, definitely pay attention to this. So fucking great! (Matt) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, antifaces305@gmail.com, antifaces.bandcamp.com)

BESTÖVEN – *Dead Soldiers Burning In Hell…* – Does there really need to be an introduction for, or a description of, Brasil's BESTÖVEN? A one man raw D-Beat assault responsible for monotonous noise on assorted formats for more than twenty years (for context: the first demo in 1995 featured a DISCLOSE cover). Tracks are, as always, straightforward D-Beat—no bullshit, primitive sounds adhering to a time honored tradition of brutality. Tracks on this tape come from the first two BESTÖVEN EPs and splits with DISCLOSE, WARVICTIMS, VIOLATION, SKELETON, TRIOXIN 254, and others. (Robert) (33-track cassette, lyrics included, lutralutrarec@gmail.com)

BIG BLEACH – *Under the Bleacherz* – Mississippi's BIG BLEACH returns with this tour tape that compiles three originals and *four* cover songs. BIG BLEACH has some vibes of that loose Midwestern weirdness (read: Lumpy Rex, CRYOGENICS, CCTV, etc), but their Southern style freedom and lack of any pretension are what make it so crucial. It's simple and fun and punk and wonderful. They cover KIM WILDE, MINUTEMEN, ANGRY SAMOANS, and ZERO BOYS. Two big thumbs up. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, bigbleach.bandcamp.com, 1504 W 6th St, Hattiesburg, MS 39401)

BLEEDING GUMS – Truly desperate sounding punk from Chicago here. This sounds like it was recorded on a four-track mixer plugged into a crack box and *that is a good thing*. The musicianship of these people borders between genius and inept, which is a great way to be. They mostly stick to the mid-tempo 4/4 thing, and the vocalist fuckin' wails. If you found yourself at a show with BLEEDING GUMS, LIQUIDS, and the COWBOYS, you know everything would be okay. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, kidgruesometapes@gmail.com)

BUCKET FLUSH – Raucous Philadelphia shit punk with tracks about giving drugs to kids and choking to death sexually. Stza-esque vocal *yeowl*s and music that ranges from kooky (in a DK sort of way, but more distortion) to aggressive and in your face. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, bucket-flush.bandcamp.com)

CARCASS TOSS – *Demo I* – Enough already, Halifax. Stop it with the bands. We get it, you're better than everyone else, but can you please give every other city a fucking chance? This month's installment in domination is CARCASS TOSS, a filthy dose of UK82 punk reincarnated as sinister black metal. BONE AWL is the obvious comparison here, though I think that CARCASS TOSS delves deeper into the dark, moist recesses of primitive metal-punk. For those who pay attention to this section, it's worth noting that Cody Cross handles everything here but the vocals…I shake my head at the ever growing list of high quality releases that young man has had a hand in. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, cody_cross@hotmail.com, johnvon86@yahoo.ca)

THE CHARLEY FEW – *Live in South Philly* – This is a live recording from a band that sounds like they really hold it down in the Philadelphia street punk/Oi! scene. The songs are catchy and circle-pit-inspiring with plenty of opportunities to learn the lyrics on the spot and join in. The singer rants against old burnout punks who would rather sit in a bar talking shit about how dead punk is than come to a show and against the notoriously corrupt Philadelphia police. To be fair, I kind of get why people outgrow street punk. But, when these guys yell "Fuck the Philly Police!" it's so sincere and fun that I can really see people who weren't all the way there yet getting on board. They also call out someone for acting like a tough guy and dedicate a song to new punks, which is rad and adorable (just picture all the hairspray-floppy mohawks and homemade EXPLOITED patches!). The between-song monologues are almost as fun as the songs themselves. I wouldn't be surprised if this band were to lure a few cynical old punks into the pit again. (Heather) (6-song tape, lyrics not included, thecharleyfew.bandcamp.com)

CHOREA HUNTINGTON – *Haunting Memory* – Dual vocal German hardcore with just the right dusting of melody, mostly in the guitar leads and the female vokills, equally rooted in mid-'00s D-beat, '80s anarcho-punk, and mid-'90s DIY hardcore. Even though they draw from the past, CHOREA HUNTINGTON never sound redundant. Whole thing is forceful, and the up-front politically charged lyrics are appreciated…good stuff. (Robert) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, U. Fassnacht, Wedekindstr. 21, 10243 Berlin, GERMANY, info@ulrichfassnacht.de)

CLOSET WITCH – Absolutely demented, manic grind from Iowa. If you have a pulse, every track will throw you into a lurch. Frenetic bursts of power fronted by some of the most demanding vocals I've heard in…well, they are very demanding. Start/stop brutality and an insane combination of impassioned screamo and all-out grind, though I think that the latter is probably more the band's intent. Perhaps I mostly dig this because I haven't heard anything that sounds remotely like it all month, but I probably just dig it because it's really, really good. (Robert) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, 1615 Lucas St., Muscatine, IA 52761, closetwitchband@gmail.com, sassbologna.com)

COMA VIGIL – *Your Hardcore is Dead* – I'm so stoked to get this because singer Tom Foote's voice is like a soothing blanket for me. His gravel and broken glass voice has fronted vicious hardcore bands like SPAWN SACS, TURD HUNGRY CHRIST, and the SHIT. In COMA VIGIL he teams up with members of RAG RAGE and FUTURE VIRGINS to shit out awesome blazing hardcore that recalls some of the dissonant animosity of mid-period BORN AGAINST…maybe even JESUS LIZARD but way more straightforward. Chattanooga, as usual, delivers the goods. So pissed off. So great! (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, P.O. Box 6023, Chattanooga, TN 37301, comavigil.bandcamp.com)

DEATH CHURCH / MASSES – *split* – Gothy deathrock from Australia. MASSES from Melbourne show off some uniquely structured and densely layered jams that also manage to be catchy at times. The amount of stuff happening at once in their songs doesn't always work in their favor, but it does provide a surprising and fun distinction from typical deathrock fare. Side-B is DEATH CHURCH from Sydney whose goth punk is a bit dirtier and gruffier than I expected (which isn't a bad thing). Their slightly surfy songs are drenched in chorus and contain great melodic guitar playing throughout (especially on "Betrayal"). Bonus points for the tape art being embossed and looking really good. (Ricky) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, lostinfogdistro.bigcartel.com)

DEFECT DEFECT – *Deefography* – I'm still upset that Portland's DEFECT DEFECT broke up, but they had a good run. This tape discography was put together for their final tour of Japan and collects all of their releases except for the final EP on Snuffy Smiles. Quite simply, DEEF was a punk band (no sub-genres) who wrote anthemic and powerful shit about feeling beaten down by this goddamn world and still trudging through it even though you knew you may never win…and even if you did win, what does "winning" even mean? The later stuff gets into my favorite era, where they were writing NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS-like, straightforward punk, and it just sounds bleak as fuck. Listening to all of this makes me realize their impact, and I miss them even more than before. Good work. (Greg) (17-song cassette, lyrics not included, Snuffy Smiles, 9-16-5-402 Kamitsurama Honcho, Minamiku, Sagamiko, Kanagawa 252-0318 Japan)

DIGI BOYS – *Digi Demo* – Some KBD-licious punk from McAllen, Texas. The singer strangely sounds somewhere between Darby Crash and the singer from the TEMPLARS; snotty and burly. The tracks are straight and raw with jangly guitar riffs, upbeat drums, and fluid keyboarding. *"Your country doesn't want me, fuck you, we're here to stay! Queer, brown, proud, gonna make ya pay!"* This shit is hot, get into it. (Matt) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, ronniesmail14@gmail.com, digiboys.bandcamp.com)

DISTERROR – *Catharsis* – Wow. Sick, all over the place black metal crust with an abyssal intro, hints of D-beat and phonophobic stenchcore galore. Sputtering drum fills at twice the speed they need to be create a technical crust whiplash within the pendulum swing pace and militant molasses outros. Some of the drum hits have so much ambience they create a boom, like if Phil Collins played for BOLT THROWER. EXCREMENT OF WAR comes to mind as well. There are no surprising flavors here, but the pot is genuinely broiling, which proves there is still some life to scrape out of this sound. So much chaos and fury on the drums and strings, which tighten up with punk madness, and I imagine DISTERROR rips it up live. DISTERROR is SANCTUM 2020. Killer tape. (Jason) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, caligarirecords.com, disterrordbeat@gmail.com)

DUMSPELL – Here's another ruling and new punk band from Hattiesburg, MS. They crank out mid-tempo melodic punk. The vocals fly between pissed off and uninterested but never bored. Something about it reminds me of a less manic PATSY. The reverb on the vocals is *high*, which gives it a fuzzy, wet feeling. This is a good beginning, and I'm looking forward to hearing the next thing they have coming along. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, dumspell.bandcamp.com)

DYE – More decrying of the pigs and society from this Austin quartet. The recording is punchier this time around, but you can expect the same '80s USHC riff style, throttling bass, and dry but snotty vocals. A couple tracks ride on a plodding pogo backbone, but mostly they move at a fast pace. The drumming is creative and supremely fluid and is the key factor that really pushes this into "raging" territory for me. The style reminds me a bit of DAWN OF HUMANS at times, minus the arty-weirdoness (not meant as a burn to either band). I vote yes. (Matt) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, $5 ppd in the US, hatecopshc@yahoo.com)

86 GEMINI – *Actualize* – Very mathematical and technical hardcore driving at a blitz-pace before loosening up into a scattered, controlled stumble and then roaring back again. It seems like they're purposely throwing us through hurdles, but honestly I felt like they were in control the whole time, and the adrenaline is actually pretty pleasant. They're not trying to hurt you or make the experience particularly difficult. It's intense music that's made to be enjoyed. (Michael) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, 86gemini.bandcamp.com)

EITHER HAWK – Featuring members of PLANES MISTAKEN FOR STARS, PELICAN, and MILEMARKER, this is this band's only recording. Elements of post-metal but with motor churning good-time groove metal, so it's cool to see where these musicians came from now that we know where they went. They can be heavy (almost butt) and atmospheric, but it is spread thin enough that it's still head-banging trucker metal similar to KOWLOON WALLED CITY. If you like any of the bands that were born after this then it's a cool history lesson. If you've never heard any of those bands then Google that shit. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, no contact)

FAST FUCKERS / IIIAPM CC – *split* – Absolutely destructive and terrifying hardcore from FAST FUCKERS. People go to great lengths to make music sound this disgusting, but it seems to come natural for these mutants—ferocious, chaotic, primal hardcore punk. On the flip, IIIAPM CC blast their way through three terrifying bursts of off the rails fastcore/grind, their final recording before the death of their bassist. You feel like the tape is going to fukkn explode your system because both sides are just so manic and chaotic. Excellent tracks for noise freaks and raw punk fukkrs. For context, IIIAPM CC (CHARM SS) hail from Yakutsk (that's in waaaay Northeast Russia), while FAST FUCKERS come from Krasnodar in the south of Russia near the Black fucking Sea…you know, in case you ever feel isolated. Do yourself a favor. (Robert) (11-song cassette, lyrics included [in Russian, of course], lostcauserecords.bandcamp.com)

GASM – *Dirty Beach* – Montreal's GASM is D-beat hardcore with barking spaz-screams and sudden whiplash tempo changes, all with banger riffs! Always blasting, always thrashing, but when they chill out they work their way down into groovy riffs that move into thrash metal; so like backwards crossover. Instead of metal incorporating hardcore it's hardcore that utilizes groove metal. It's a cool feeling, so go with it. (Michael) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, gazmmtl.bandcamp.com)

GUN – These dudes are from Northwest Indiana, but are light years away from their neighbors in CCTV and LIQUIDS. GUN plays blues-tinged rock with *a whole lot* of harmonica and cliché lyrics about snake wine, girls, and livin' hard…like a less produced, drunk, and more fun BLACK CROWES. (Greg) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, indianagun@gmail.com)

HATE ME TOMORROW – These motherfuckers are from Germany, but they sound like they're taking their cues from late '80s and early '90s East Coast HXC…like fuckin' MADBALL and YOUTH OF TODAY. Every song has a breakdown and youth crew-style vocals. Just dudes being dudes, man. You know what I mean? (Greg) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, facebook.com/hatemetomorrow, awayfromlife.com)

HUMAN MANIA – Plastic beer bag at my side, right fist banging furiously over head while I blast HUMAN MANIA's six-song creamer for the fourth time in a row. Nonstop, no bullshit, blown out D-beat raw punk from Baltimore. Bombastic drums, manic riffs interrupted by noise, and the ever tormented echo of over-manipulated new millennium punk vocals… ahhh, yes. I'll have another, please. More volume? Thank you. (Robert) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, humanmaniaband@gmail.com)

HYPER TENSIONS – Garage rock that wins the award for most 'verbed vox that I've heard so far. They sit so low under the fuzzy guitars that they swim under the sonic current like a middle child standing behind their taller cousin in a family photo. Very jam-centric but with surprisingly banger fuckin' hooks that pull the cassette along without dropping any

energy. These guys have the same heartbeat as TRUE WIDOW but with a house party pulse. (Michael) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, letspretendrecords1.bandcamp.com)

JUNTA – *Aranhas* – Copenhagen punkers that wrote the word "Punk" all over the cassette and artwork, but it sounds just like traditional thrash metal. There's definitely punk rock all over the record, and they're tapping into the punk end of thrash, but it's never not metal. Plenty of face-melting solos and blast beats but always with a punk twinkle in their eyes. Vocals are crazy, with black metal 'verb that at times chills out into more of a clean delay, bringing the vox up and out of the pit and then pushing him back down. Exactly what I'd expect from København punx. (Michael) (5-song cassette, lyrics included, juntapunx.bandcamp.com)

KLAZO – These guys cover both the REATARDS and FREESTONE, so that should give you a good idea of where they're coming from. Geographically, they're coming from London (the Canadian one) and they play completely blown out garage punk in the vein of the aforementioned bands and the OBLIVIANS. No slow moments. All rock with everything set to ten and destined to self-destruct at any moment. A great tape. (Greg) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, klazo.bandcamp.com)

LAZARUS DEATH CULT – Minimal, droning, plodding, amateurish electronic drug-punk from Calgary. It's too non-music for my taste and sounds totally improvisational, but I'm proud to say I listened to the whole thing! Any time I get close to getting into a groove, they do well to fragment or bury any resemblance of a hook that I might want to sink my teeth into. I imagine this is not accidental. Comes off a bit pretentious to me, but fans of weird noise may enjoy adding this to their nightmarish vision-quest. (Matt) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, lazarusdeathcvlt@gmail.com, #47 Erin Croft Crescent SE, Calgary, AB T2B 2T8 CANADA)

THE LIMBOS – The LIMBOS come from Jackson, MS, and play simple-ass 1-2-1-2 pogo-style punk that rails against their (the south… Mississippi) long history of shitty racism, macho-man bullshit, and dealing with the never-ending plague of goddamn posers. Their singer sounds like some lurching mutant who's swiping his disfigured paw at a line of confederate flag-toting fuckheads. This shit is good, y'all! True hardcore for the kids and haters. (Greg) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, thelimbospunk.bandcamp.com)

THE LUCKY BOYS – The LUCKY BOYS are from Seattle and play tight, bouncy, bar punk rock with songs about partying and drinking. The singer sometimes has a little bite that reminds me of the DISTILLERS, which is tight. Simple three chord punk that probably sounds *way* better after five pints and a goddamn assload of cocaine. (Greg) (5-song CD-R, lyrics not included, facebook.com/the-lucky-boys)

MEMORY HOLE – *Demo 2015* – Initially, I was pretty *whatever* about the first two serious angry HC songs on this one, but the third track covers some almost playful ground with a short, looping, weirdo round as a bridge, which primed me more for the side-to-side mosher of the next track. I love dumb hardcore as much as the next person sans dangly, but there's also some interesting guitar work on the first track that takes you away from the oft-tread ground of the genre for a minute. The cover of this tape is a dick covered in glitter. You decide if it's for you or not. (Sean) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, +1 (204) 793-2723, memoryhole2.bandcamp.com, 906 Warsaw Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3M1E2 CANADA)

MUTUAL JERK – Gloomy and monotonous mid-tempo punk from Atlanta. Sometimes I'm reminded of *Paganicons* era SACCHARINE TRUST, but this is not as quirky or sharp. The vocals are tortured and depressed sounding, which only deepens the overall desperate tone. Housed in a lovingly-screened j-card. (Matt) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, mutualjerk.bandcamp.com)

PROM NITE – *Demo 2015* – Wonderfully discordant punk from Toronto. The guitarist throws in all these flitting, fuzzed-out melodic riffs that manage to keep the songs catchy, poppy, and playful, while still fierce. The tape comes with a cute ribbon attached to it that worked okay while playing it in my tape deck. The vocals are at least as driving as the music, yipping and barking, sassing and shouting, and I wish I knew what vocalist Anya was saying. In a quote from *MRR*'s New Blood section in January, they cite their lyrical inspirations as "Mental health, self-care, fuckboys being fuckboys. Sometimes playful and sometimes honest." Even without printed lyrics, the playfulness and the honesty come through loud and clear. (Sean) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, murdercityvideo.bigcartel.com, murdercityvideo@aol.com.

PUBLIC EYE – For the uninitiated (like I was five minutes ago), Portland's AUTISTIC YOUTH morphed into PUBLIC EYE. Same people, different songs. It's as if they grew a little older, dropped the Copenhagen worship, and (ahem) matured. On this demo, the band has subdued vocals and less breakneck speeds than their previous incarnation, while the guitar intricacies lay just below the surface. The riffs are kind of monotonous in that good way that makes me think of WIRE and GANG OF FOUR. I feel cheesy saying this, but each song settles into a groove. When the first song hit the four-minute mark, I honestly wished that it would keep on for ten. It sounds confident in that way you get from playing with the same people for years. Great stuff. They have an LP on the way. (Greg) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, publiceye.bandcamp.com)

RAD – *Return of Thrash Radical* – RAD is rad as fuck. They are from Sacramento and get to the fucking point ASAP. Do you want D.R.I.'s *Dirty Rotten EP* played fast as shit with a woman singing it instead of a man? Do you want seven songs to blaze by you in less than five minutes? This is your tape. RAD is super tight and has riffs for days. Shit destroys. (Greg) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o Charles Albright, 331 21st St, Sacramento, CA 95811, facebook.com/rad.sacto)

SEM HASTRO – This is fucking *sick*. I guess some of these guys live in DC, but their singer lives in São Paulo and sings in Portuguese. It's straight-ahead, nasty, lo-fi hardcore, and their singer has this cool style where he sounds like he's retching and puking, but not like a shitty grindcore singer. It's urgent, fun, and a breath of fresh air in this world where everyone is trying to be "weird" but can't actually write a good song. Oddly, it reminds me of CRUDOS and BAD BRAINS, which, you know, isn't a bad thing. (Heather) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, semhastro.bandcamp.com)

SIDETRACKED – *Escape* – Substantially lower fidelity that I'm used to with these Washington fastcore stalwarts, but SIDETRACKED still do not disappoint. Ten creamers in two fukkn minutes (and, if you're good at math, "Controller" clocks in at 0:25), folks, and there are *still* riffs for days. These kids are ferocious, and their approach to fast music is still refreshing after countless releases. (Robert) (10-song CD-R, lyrics included, J_Tichy@hotmail.com, sidetrackedhc.blogspot.com, sidetracked.bandcamp.com)

STREET CLONES – *Cloned for Your Pleasure* – A little bit punk rock'n'roll occupying the unfrequented borderlands between the RAMONES and the DEAD MILKMEN. The vocals sound like the singer from CRUCIFUCKS but more monotone. It's weirder than it thinks it is and would probably feel at home on a Dangerhouse comp from the '80s with other long-forgotten true freaks that were inventing punk because they couldn't help it. I hope these guys cover the Monster Mash during Halloween, cause that would really be something. (Heather) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, streetclones.bandcamp.com)

TERRORIST – *Post Mortem* – Posthumous collection of tracks from Florida black metal tinged grind punks TERRORIST. Heavy as shit, mean as hell, and fast….? Shit, punk, if you want fast then this is your jam. Tracks culled from previous releases, my favorite of which is *Kryiarchy Destroyer*, a massive dose of down-tuned grind/punk madness. Nothing short of pure brutality spread out over 30 tracks. (Robert) (30-song CD-R, lyrics included, terroristfl.bandcamp.com)

TONGUE PARTY – I want my independent rock'n'roll music to sound like this. Low end fuzz like the WHIP, soaring and distant lead vox yearning to break free like DASHER, and a guitar attack that just nails heavy psych-punk.

And TONGUE PARTY just fukkn *jams* like a full throttle freight train on wide-open tracks. Full cream status. It's over before it really sinks in… so your only option is repeat listens. (Robert) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, c/o 2121 Garfield Ave. South, Apt. #106, Minneapolis, MN 55404, tongueparty.bancamp.com)

TOTALLY GNARLY – This is drunk dudes playing soulless RANCID and PENNYWISE-style, harmonic-chorded songs about shitting your pants and being in a bad mood. They're musically proficient, and their singer sometimes reaches a Danzig-like twang, but it has no bite. (Greg) (5-song CD-R, lyrics included, facebook.com/totallygnarlyband)

TYRANTS – *Dark Match* – Wow, this one's a ripper from start to finish. Tight and off-kilter at the same time, these fellas play frantic postmodern art-punk for degenerate paupers. This release comes packaged with a rad zine complete with a manifesto exploring the farcical nature of rock music in the face of cosmic entropy, flyers, collage, and lyrics. The band works as a living entity, together, either in struggle against or in absurd acceptance of it. The guitars weave sheets of texture and warped melody into the strongly rhythmic bass, the driving force of the songs along with the extremely minimal drum kit (snare and hi-hat) into a panic born out of the end of one's wit. References for nerds are DEVO, CAPTAIN BEEFHEART, and NERVE BEATS. You need this in your punk. (Sean) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, tyrantspdx@hotmail.com, tyrants.bandcamp.com, 9806 N Midway, Apt B, Portland, OR 97203 USA)

ULTRA – A new Oi! band from Oakland, these cats kick out a handful of fist-pumping, melodic punk jammers that have surprisingly not stupid (or are they stupid after all?) lyrics. Songs about the proto-working class of ancient Sumer, stomping techies, bottling cops, and the duality of gay Neo-Nazi Nicky Crane abound. Honestly it's kind of science fiction Oi!, and I never knew that could exist. Anyway, shout-out to the halftone picture of Sinead O'Connor on the cover. (Sean) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, livelifeultra@gmail.com, livelifeultra.bandcamp.com)

VÜRMO–Greasy and creamy D-beat rock'n'roll from Portugal for fans of GENOCIDE SS and the like. A non-stop churn, straight to the point. Fave track: "Dirty Pit." (Robert) (6-song CD-R, lyrics not included, vurmoscum@gmail.com, vurmo.bandcamp.com)

WHIP – *Demo 2015* – Desperate, pissed, and rabid punk from Winnipeg. Vocalist/bassist Ferro rails against shitty lovers, shitty friends, and shitty sexism like they've been pushed too far and they're sick of your shit. The songs make you feel their frustration tangibly, like you are trapped in a room that is rapidly shrinking and you are sweating bullets trying to claw your way out. Four songs in five minutes, and I can't wait to hear what's next for this band. (Sean) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, whipswhipswhips.bandcamp.com, 906 Warsaw Ave, Winnipeg, MB R3M1E2 Canada)

V/A – *Sonidos de Una Nueva Era Año Ø* – A stunning collection of contemporary punk bands from Andalusia (autonomous region in the south of Spain). I was already familiar with the brilliance of LA URSS, COPYCATS, and CARNE, so this compilation introduced me to SPUTNIK VENENO, TENTACULO, ANTIROCKERS, MIERDA, and PERROS DEL DESIERTO. I am grateful. Most of these bands sound melodic and have catchy songs. A couple tracks are more Spanish hardcore or D-beat influenced, but everything here is great. The tracks seem to be previously released, according to the stuff I already knew and the very little research I did, but I still recommend this tape as a snapshot of a strong regional scene! Two songs from each band, not one stinker. (Matt) (16-song cassette, lyrics not included, andaluciauberalles.blogspot.com, cargocollective.com.aua)

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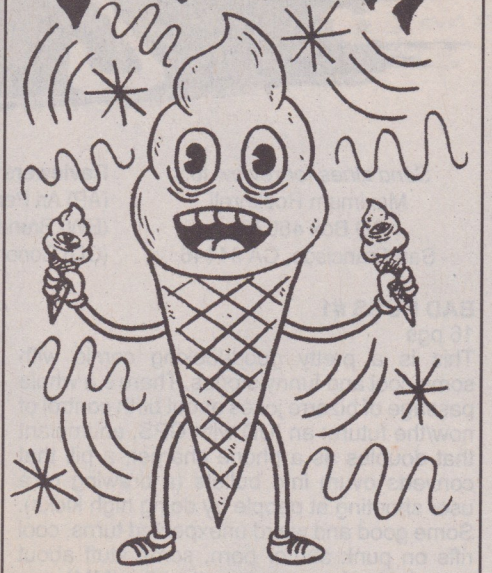

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GO WHITE BRONCO
***POPULATION: GHOST TOWN* LP**
Five years in the making, *Population: Ghost Town* is the first LP from Long Island lifer-band Go White Bronco. A lineup of musicians culled from 20-year collaborators and friends from local bands like Iron Chic, Fellow Project, Deep Pockets, Splurge, and Ancient Tongue, this nine track debut full length is a mostly bleak, sometimes triumphant existential meditation led by three acoustic guitars, crushing lyrics, and soaring multi-part harmonies. Crosby, Stills, Hash, and Old.

BOILERMAN
***FEEL WAYS ABOUT STUFF* LP/CD**
With four EPs, an LP, and a slew of cassettes and compilations released since their 2010 demo, Boilerman has played over 170 shows across the US and Canada. The band's sophomore full length is 12 new songs using a sonic pallet drawn as much from bands like Leatherface and Articles of Faith as it is contemporaries like Canadian Rifle, Tenement, and Witches with Dicks. The album is rounded out by a faithful cover of The Mice's 1986 "Not Proud Of The USA" and illustrations by Shannon Thompson.

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ZINES

Send zines for review to:
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PO Box 460760
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Reviewers:
(AP) Ari Perezdiez
(BW) Brendan Wells
(CD) Conor Duncan
(DG) Dan Goetz
(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(JB) Julia Booz
(MM) Marissa Magic
(OG) Oscar Gutierez
(TM) Taylor McKenzie

BAD HUGS #1
16 pgs
This is a pretty good-looking comic with some cool and funny stories. There's a whole passage of bizarre jokes about birth control of now/the future: an IUD with GPS, an implant that doubles as a phone charger, a pill that converts ovum into bullets (a drawing of a user shooting at people by doing high kicks). Some good and weird unexpected turns, cool riffs on punk and/or porn, some stuff about periods. It's funny and worthwhile. (MM)
no info

BUCKET FLUSH PRESENTS HATEBANGERS' BALL
14 pgs
Some band named Bucket Flush collected various unfavorable message board postings and other e-hate mail directed towards their band and compiled it in a zine. This move reeks of a band wanting attention. Sounds like they're transmisogynists, too. (DG)
Robert "Rob Shit" McKnight, 3466 Citrus St, Silver Springs, NV 89429

CITY TRASH #46
42 pgs
An inexhaustible love for garage and all its offshoots runs through this English-language Dutch zine. *City Trash* #46 opens with such breathless enthusiasm that there are no paragraph breaks for *seven* pages. The pages are half-sized and broken up with two or three photos, but still. Maybe this (run-on sentences and all) is the best way to describe the pace and disorientation of the near "Dutch SXSW" of a fest our editor is taking us to. Perhaps it's a punishing scene but worth braving for a few revelatory sets if you got a line on a guest list spot, a couple of lager beers, and some dogshit hash. It's a solid rundown and I always endorse someone putting in the work to wrap up the kind event that the rest of us may no longer have the energy for. There's a long report on a six-month visit to Memphis, plenty of gossip (at least a minor tip on why Low Life's US tour was cancelled last year), and leads on bands that sound worth looking up. There are also interviews in there with Geneva's the Staches, Holland's Wolftone, and Crash Rate X from Münster. Also: Michael Kasparis dishes on Night School Records and his solo project Apostille, a bunch of praise for German rockers Küken, more positive reinforcement for the drunk teenage boys of the Ausmuteants, some book reviews (in Dutch), record reviews (in English), and much more. There is a certain "stuck in the '90s vibe" to this one (the book reviews section is inexplicably framed with retro pinups), but this was started in 1996 after all. I found a lot to like in this zine, and you might as well. (EW)
7942, NG Omslag 1, HOLLAND / kingLES@gmail.com / citytrashmagazine.blogspot.com

CLOCKTOWER NINE #7
$3 / 18 pgs
This zine out of Seattle features various one-line observations the author has learned via postcards he's received over the years, the story of how a tradition with his friend—a bar followed by a midnight movie—got started, and the third and final installment of an interview with longtime zinester Gordon Gordon, in which he mostly talks about the Seattle pinball zine *Skill Shot* and the area's pinball scene. The cut-and-paste layout matches the slice-of-life feel of all of the content quite well. If you're interested in down-to-earth perzines, this one is better than most. (DG)
Spin Cycle Records, 321 Broadway E, Seattle, WA 98102 / clocktower9.blogspot.com

THE DO-IT-YOURSELF GUIDE TO FIGHTING THE BIG MOTHERFUCKIN' SAD
$7 / 60 pgs
I went back and forth on my feelings about this one and let my partner who works in mental health read it so we could discuss it. I guess those are technically plus points. This is a pretty simple, short manual on what works for one person to alleviate and/or detect oncoming crippling depression. I disagreed with a few of the author's methods and ideas, but as a fellow punk who gets really fucking dark, sometimes it's good to have something to read that reminds me to turn off the computer screens, go outside even if I don't want to, and fight my way out of the bag of shit I accidentally crawled in. Well worth checking out. (DZ)
Pioneers Press, 816 North Main Street #200, Lansing, KS 66043 / pioneerspress.com

EVERY THUG IS A LADY: ADVENTURES WITHOUT GENDER
$4 / 70 pgs
This is a reprint of Julia Eff's zine from 2011, which reads more like a Deadjournal from 2001 (metalcore/mallgoth clipart included). In this zine, Julia chronicles their struggle with the world not accepting them for rejecting gender all together. They identify as neutrois, which is a non-binary gender identity. There are stories of friends on and offline, family, lovers, and strangers navigating their identity, sometimes horribly, sometimes reaching that bar that we, as non-cis people, have to sometimes set so low. Read if you want to connect to a narrative of someone trying to understand their relationship to gender or if you need a square one in regards to non-binary gender identities. A warning, though: as with most of these burgeoning epiphanies, there is a lot of messiness in this zine. Anti-blackness (the title, hello), ableism, and misogyny litter the text. If you can't deal with that, there are plenty of things online and many, many other zines without the cringeworthy commentary. Hopefully five years later Julia has figured out that you don't have to throw other marginalized folks under the bus in order to carve out a space for yourself. (AP)
Pioneers Press, 816 North Main Street #200, Lansing, KS 66043 / pioneerspress.com

FUCK YOU #1
$3 / 20 pgs
This is a manifestation of that point where you're just like *fuck everything*, the moment where there is nothing else to say. This is the basest fuck you to all the encroaching suckiness that is going on in the Bay Area (probably easily transferable to any spot being swallowed up by young tech culture). A repetition of fuck you, a total reflection of living in a place that is overrun and more taken over by shit that sucks, it almost solely stands as a manifesta built of one-liners. There is a centerfold spread of a collage of cats, a menu for a theoretical twenty-four hour diner, references to focus groups. Who made this? I feel at home. (MM)
chaosqueerz.tumblr.com

HERE BE DRAGONS #10
42 pgs
This is a cool read put together by a couple of 40-year-old punks who haven't put out an issue of this zine in well over a decade. Articles include an interview with a punk boss (a really shitty situation we sometimes find ourselves in), thoughts on marriage a decade after the honeymoon, and a cool piece on libraries in prisons. There's a lot on just how much has changed for them (and the world) in ten years. I know that sounds boring as fuck, but it's really well written and, while not mind blowing, the two authors have an interesting take on things. I totally dig it. (DZ)
4625 Torley Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15224

NEED FOR 'CRETE: PACIFIC NORTHWEST TRIPPIN' PHOTO ZINE
18 pgs
This is a minizine that documents eleven concrete skateparks of the Northwest that the author visited on a Greyhound skate trip. They were visiting from another country, but they don't say where. The photos show the bowls and transitions, but no skating. It's kind of like a little travel guide for skaters. The captions give a few quick anecdotes about the trip, but they mostly tell you about the shape of the parks. Not a ton of insightful content, but a fun little read if you've ever wanted to take a trip like this. (BW)
no info

OVER AMPING/FREE
free, stamps, trade / 8 pgs
Here's another great addition to the series from the local lowlifes down at Mission Mini-Comix. This issue tackles the issue of what happens when you *over amp* on speed. It's personal but informative and straight to the point. Plus the melty, sweaty, dark, and fucked ink illustrations you crave. You ever been stared down by a hundred foot tall meth pipe and given in to the rants of the shadow people while not knowing if there was a light at the end of the tunnel? This one's for you! (EC)
minicomix@gmail.com / missionminicomix.com

THE PARISH PUNK #1
€8 subscription / 6 pgs
I'm really into the formatting of this one. It's a tri-fold on 11x17" paper, and there is a lot of simple text layout with some small photos. It feels more like esoteric hippie self-publishing than a punk style zine, and I think that's really exciting. "A freesheet that aims to promote and encourage everything DIY punk on the island of Ireland." Damn, that's tight. The content straddles that line between punk and hippie: we got mini scene reports, show listings, and news from local record labels alongside recipes, some talk about taking care of chickens, and a piece on gardening in recycled containers. This is issue number one, and it looks like they just put up issue number four for order. I'm going to hunt down more copies of this for myself. (BW)
theparishpunk@riseup.net / theparishpunk.tumblr.com

PLASTIC BOMB #93
€3.50 / 79 pgs
Mostly in German with the exception of Denice Bourbon's "Queer as Hell, Punk as Fuck" column, which is in English. This zine is packed to the logical brim with interviews, if you're into that sort of thing. Features include the second half of the Top 15 UK Punk LPs 1977-85 (It's a tie between *Never Mind the Bollocks* and *Stations of the Crass*, apparently) and interviews with the Shrine, the Boys, Romano, and No Problem, among others. From what I can tell; this is something like a German language *Razorcake*. Came with a free CD, *Ficken Saufen Hipster Punk #93*, which more or less confirmed this. (CD)
plastic-bomb.de

QUITTER: GOOD LUCK NOT DYING
$7 / 61 pgs
The negative voice runs hot in our little subcultural ghetto. Often I find some of my most rewarding relationships have been wrought by conflict and strife. It's an easy affinity found in resisting the shitworld. This is the first zine I've ever reviewed with blurbs on the back and the cute little package didn't quite prepare me for the dark interior. Trace is loosely compared to the voices of Orwell and Bradbury in the introduction (yeah... there's an introduction, too) and still I wasn't quite prepared for the oblique pessimism I've found in his work. Dead end stories about the futility of city life, jobs, and modern civilization as well as just living in a world where those things exist. It would be easy to say that his argument against the world is political, but honestly it reads mostly emotional. I'm sympathetic, certainly, but it's just hard to read. Not in an "unflinching honesty" sort of way but in a "Is this some sad guy's diary?" sort of way. I'm all for living the life that brings you joy, and I'd like to believe there is a back-to-the-land imperative that can't just be reduced to the colonial pageantry of the idea of a simple or freer life, but it seems daunting when you consider, like, history or whatever. (EC)
Pioneers Press, 816 North Main Street #200, Lansing, KS 66043 / pioneerspress.com

RAZORCAKE #90
$4 / 112 pgs
Usually when I read this magazine, I generally think the same thing..."Not so bad. If you normally dislike *Razorcake*, this would be a good issue to change your mind." Unfortunately, I didn't have those thoughts this time. This issue celebrates their fifteenth year in print, so I'll raise my glass to that. Let's get to the meat of the matter, though. Hands down, this issue sports the worst front page artwork of any punk publication in history, they have huge ads for Microcosm (who can suck it, by the way), an article on outlaw country which says "Fuck Johnny Cash" in bold print, comics that are actual factual garbage (except I still love Snakepit), and two page columns that didn't mean dick to me, half of which are incredibly huge and unnecessary terrible illustrations. Apart from my favorite game of "*MRR* vs. *Razorcake*'s dueling, disagreeing music reviews," this issue bummed me out. (DZ)
PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042

SIN NOTICIAS DE LA DESTRUCCION
€2.00 / 40 pgs
I had a long talk with someone who was trying to understand sci-fi last week, and I told them how sci-fi is a possibility. I speak of this possibility in the context of what the world, under systemic oppression, sickness, and other factors imposed on us can be. Sometimes we think flying cars, and other times we may think of possibilities of suffering and extreme thought as our future. This zine speaks to that idea of the possibility in sci-fi. Silvia Rosarte, the mind behind this zine, is doing work through narrative by placing the reader in a future that is, frankly, somewhat terrifying. It is one of those works that was made with thought and full on creativity, with the intention to move beyond the story and into the possibilities I speak of when I talk about sci-fi and futuristic works. Although lost at some points, I did enjoy it and would definitely give it another pass when not totally unprepared. (OG)
silviaresorte@hotmail.com

SOLITUDE #6
free / 34 pgs
English-language cut-and-paste fanzine from Switzerland. The content is split between interviews with Final Nightmare, the Fags, Strafplanet, record reviews, and interesting collage art. The text got hard to read in the record review section, but when you get into the small text, you're reading the glowing reviews of someone who is really enthusiastic about punk. There's a lot going on in this zine, and I found myself going back and reading it a few times to make sure that I didn't miss anything. The person who wrote this clearly puts a lot of effort into it—the quality of the design and the printing reflect that. There's a lot of potential here, and it ultimately left me wanting more (in a good way). (CD)
solitudezine.blogspot.ch

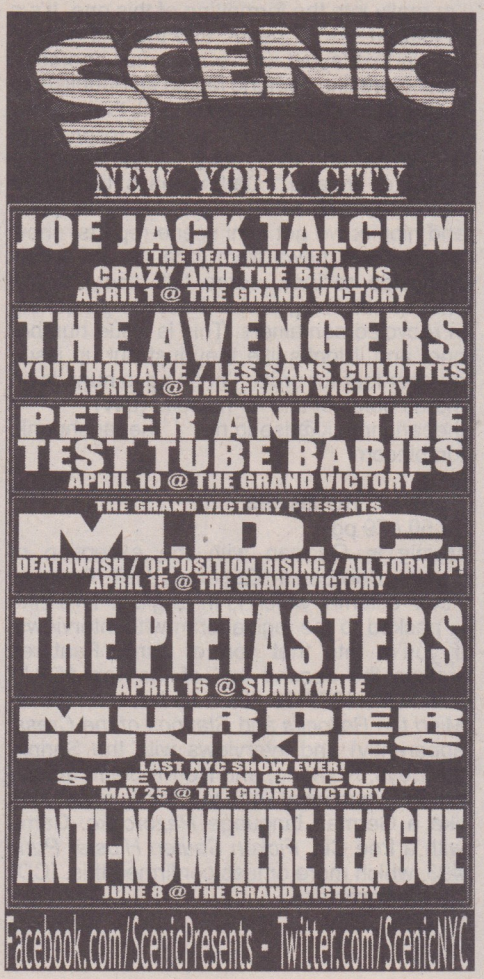
TECH BUBBLE HEADS
free, stamps, trade / 8 pgs
This is another zine from the collection of Mission Mini-Comix. Of course, the discourse on gentrification is essential in San Francisco amongst the wave of tech bros displacing families and completely getting rid of low-income migrant communities in the Bay Area. I am not sure who the makers of Mission Mini-Comix are in conversation with when they make these zines, nor who they are meant to serve. How and with who does this discourse happen with? Are these conversations with art and creativity via zines happening with the very low-income migrant (often times non-English speaking) communities that are being displaced? Or are they happening within anarchist circles and not moving past that? Sure, this is a cool way of presenting the information on how much techies should fuck off, but I do believe the discourse can and has to be bigger than this. As with all zines, I have to push forward the idea that sometimes the issue or cultural production is bigger than your zine, and it's the conversations around the zine that make it significant, and I hope this does that, at the very least. (OG)
minicomix@gmail.com / missionminicomix.com

THE THRILL OF LIVING IN A DYING WORLD: PRISON, EVERYBODY'S DOIN' IT!
free, stamps, trade / 8 pgs
Another installment of the excellent Mission Mini-Comix. This one is fantastic. It's full of quick statistics with their logical conclusions and analysis fundamentally explored in the shortest zine possible. It's one sheet folded into eight pages. I love how they manage to get at the most critical facts while keeping it funny somehow. It's a dark humor that exposes the racism and control of impoverished populations by the state. America has the largest number of incarcerated people, and Black and Brown folks are getting locked away at much higher percentages than any

other race. The facts are detailed here with the accompanying data for support. Imprisonment rates have increased with the increase of the privatization of prisons. Even with such a short zine, the information is brilliantly captured in illustrations that convey the stark truths of our most shameful practice. (JB)
minicomix@gmail.com / missionminicomix.com

TRUST #175
66 pgs
The city of Bremen in Germany has been printing *Trust* for two and a half decades now. The zine is printed in German, and this issue has some interesting columns, one of which stunned me with a quick line: "Liberté, Egalité, Beyoncé." There's also a decent political column, mostly addressing refugee rights and the closing off of European borders to areas of conflict, which were spurned by Western arms trade and cruel economic agreements. Some cross-cultural highlights and interesting bits I found include an interview with the band Government Flu, which contains members living in both Poland and Germany. They talk about touring the US, saying that touring in the US is "rawer" than in Europe, and that people don't normally cook for touring bands (whereas in Europe, cooking for bands is nothing extraordinary, but rather a fundamental aspect of booking a show). This is nothing new for bands touring the US, but I think it's progressive to reflect on international differences and the different standards of DIY efforts across the globe (Hey everyone, let's all start setting aside more time for the shows we book and cook a cheap, nutritious meal for the musicians we support!). Another interesting report is a spread about the city of Shanghai written by someone who lived there from 2006 to 2011. It's very insightful as to how the whole city functions, how the Shanghai lifestyle is a stressful one but full of wild nights (if you can afford them, that is) and, of course, as to how the DIY music scene works. The spread is half a report, half an interview with Andy Best, a blogger/musician/author living in Shanghai. There's also an interview with the band Küken and the head of Epistrophy Records. As for book/zine reviews, they mostly review German-language stuff, along with some US magazines like *Razorcake* and *MRR*. As to what they review and print, they leave it very forwardly up to their own discretion and tastes—"*Trust* is Taste" reads their motto. Even if the content doesn't directly line up to my personal tastes (lots of Leatherface worship, and I'm just not that into much of the Epistrophy catalogue), I have to say, the magazine looks slick. (TM)
trust-zine.de

"WHAT'S UP, GRIM?": HAUNTED HAYRIDERS IN THEIR OWN WORDS
$8 / 54 pgs
"Fear is a man's best friend," as the song goes, and as such a person in the grips of fright has a way of opening up with a lack of self-awareness or inclination to check themselves. That at least is my conclusion after poring over *What's Up Grim?* In this zine, a man who played the role of the Grim Reaper on a haunted hayride writes down nearly everything he's overheard from the groups of people who've taken it. The quotes are broken up by a number of photos of the ride. The costumes are pretty gory. Most of the reactions are pretty funny, if you also like dad humor, preteen awkwardness, and childish non-sequitors. Some of the reactions are legitimately fucked up. Somehow dudes use this ride as an opportunity to blurt out everything from racist and homophobic slurs to threats of sexual violence. Maybe it's an effort to seem a bit tougher upon realizing that some moment of shock turned out to be totally unfounded. Maybe some of these people were legitimately unimpressed by the haunting experience. It is hard to say: pretending not to be afraid can uncover yet more unflattering tendencies. Printed on heavy paper stock with lots of black ink for maximum durability. (EW)
210 Cook Street #302, Brooklyn, NY 11206 / adamfinchler@gmail.com / ginkner.bigcartel.com



CLASSIFIEDS

That's right, lonely punks, the classified section is making a comeback! Send in your requests for records, pen pals, zine submissions, or whatever else you desire summed up in 40 words or less for next month's classifieds section. Direct all of your submissions to **classifieds@maximumrocknroll.com**. Ads will cost $2—payment details on submission.

RARE VIDEOS OF GG ALLIN: GG ALLIN funeral, GG ALLIN pissing on my mom's lawn at 7 am. GG STILL KING. EAT SHIT// DIE. Send SASE for full list of all VHS tapes. c/o Gerg, PO Box 40786, SF, CA 94140

SLANDERMAG: slanderous magazine is looking for your contribution. Got shit to talk on your scene? Got an opinion that is too hot for most to handle? *Slandermag* wants you. slandermag@gmail.com

PEN PALS! If you wanna trade postcards, zines, cassettes, jokes, etc. Into Grateful Dead, French comics, Devo, plants, etc... It's a wiggly world... Dr. Wells PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146

DRUM GEAR NEEDED: Lost the pestilent clutch to my hi-hat stand at last night's *Hard Times* gig. Leave it at the stoar for me to pick up.

STAR WARS and other space and TV toys wanted. Figures, vehicles, with or without original packaging. I'll trade records (I have a four page trade list) or pay cash for them. Rob Cleveland, 1705 Gateway, Middleton, WI 53562 USA

WANTED: '90s-'00s thrash/crust/emo records from Ebullition, 625, Havoc records, and the like. Stuff I have for trade: Necros EP, Misfits "Bullet," Dicks "Hate the Police," Sado Nation 7", Agent Orange "Your Mother Sucks" 7", Wretched/Indigesti split, and more...please send trade list to sk8ordie2000@hotmail.com.

RICE HARVESTER ZINE #14: 20 year anniversary issue. Last issue! Int with 510 BAD SMUT, show reviews, and hard times in New Orleans. Screened covers and xeroxed. $2-3 ppd. Free to prisoners. c/o Greg, P.O. Box 40786, SF, CA 94140. Remoteoutposts. bigcartel.com

GARAGE SALE: My mom says everything must go! Nintendo games, tapes, t-shirts, my childhood. My loss is your gain. Email me for complete list! punkindrublic@riseup.net

INHALANT RESEARCH: participants needed. Must be available once a month for three months. Small stipend and limitless adhesives provided as compensation. huffertronpos@stanford.edu

GOATS: Do you have a goat or do you know anyone with goats? Looking to film brutal black metal music video in the Milwaukee area (goats will not be harmed). sadsatan@gmail.com

LOVE PLANTS? Is #plantfriday your favorite day of the week? Do you believe in the psychic abilities of plants? Let's do (vegan) lunch or play some tennis. freedogfoodcomics@gmail.com

SBSM TAPE. Comes with a ten page zine. Queer Oakland noise. The sound of the world falling apart. Sentimental destruction jams. $5 ppd to Greg, PO Box 40786, SF, CA 94140, No checks. remoteoutposts.bigcartel.com

SKIN WHO LOVES WORK can no longer take the hard physical labor of house painting. Looking for something at a desk in the tech industry. Plenty of Ben Sherman polos and ready to be an office firm. Oi! AmericanBootGang@gmail.com

I WILL CUT OFF your tiny penis and eat it. You will pay me. Meet me behind the Oakland bus station on 5/25/16 and say the words "I'm going to kill myself on stage on Halloween." Then, I will slice off your tiny penis, eat it and laugh at you. Letz get real in 2016. No posers, please.

FUCKING MEAN hardcore band in MPLS looking for bass player + drummer. Prefer ppl who are taller, heavier than average for max intimidation. No bullshit. Think 86 Mentality without the politics. Don't waste my time. D 605-204-0183

GIMME FEAR or gimme death. I'm looking for anything I can get my hands on by the band Fear. Such as the "I Love Livin' in the City" 7", the "Fuck X-Mas" 7", and the "Living with Fear" LP. Videos, flyers, and studio/live bootlegs wanted, too. beefbalogna@yahoo.com

ISO RIVAL MOB: will pay top dollar for vinyl and cassette to complete my collection. Contact notnormaltapes@gmail.com

LOOKING TO BOOTLEG hella shit. Got a problem with it? Don't want me to bootleg your band's shit? FUCK OFF! sickfuxdistro@hotmail.com for catalog.

CORRESPONDENCE: 19-year-old seeks mail from everyone. Into all sorts of shit. Punk rock to classical, etc. Tell me what your town is like. Mine is boring. I need your help. Stan Antone, PO Box 227, Beachville, Ontario N0J 1A0, CANADA.

EXTREME INDUSTRIAL noise wanted. Looking for tapes of any heavy farm machinery or dysfunctional lawnmowers. Hanatarash is not harsh enough for me. noisenotmusic@gmail.com

TEEN MAN looking for teen penpal to discuss Devo and Buckminster Fuller. Send me something good to Teen Man's Penthouse, 3204 3rd Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55408

FELL IN LOVE with guitar player of American Hate at SNQ fest. Who is this lovely man with the beautiful hair? Where is he now? E-mail iresignhc@gmail.com with any leads!

TRASH COORDINATOR: MRR is looking for a new coordinator to separate recycling from trash and wheel out garbage cans on Tuesday night. Up the punx, anyone? mrr@maximumrocknroll.com

SAD MEAL: Ever had a sad meal? You know what I'm talking about—spaghetti with a microwave hamburger patty on top. Send your pics to sadmeals@yahoo.com.

PUNK CELEBRITY on the top of her game looking for the cutest boys in hardcore. Can you keep up? gahorsefan@aol.com

EXTREME NOISE RECORDS brick and mortar retail now finally doing mailorder! (612) 824-0100. punk rock.

GG ALLIN LAST SHOW: @ the Gas Station. Finally available w/ all the footage from one of his most violent shows, plus all the action after the show with rioting, GG running naked out of control, and much more! Don't buy a shitty copy from Gerg. Merle Allin, 214 E 24th St, #5B, NY, NY 10010

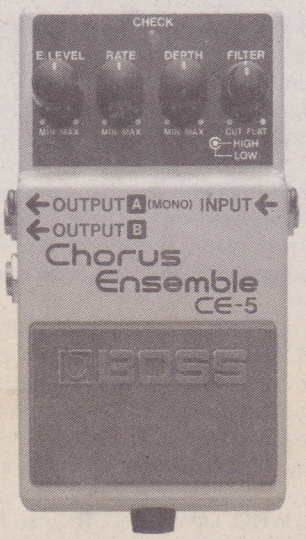
CHORUS PEDAL WANTED: Looking to start a goth rock or post-punk band with that amazing chorus tone I can't get enough of. Be the light in my dark life. romeosdistress@hotmail.com

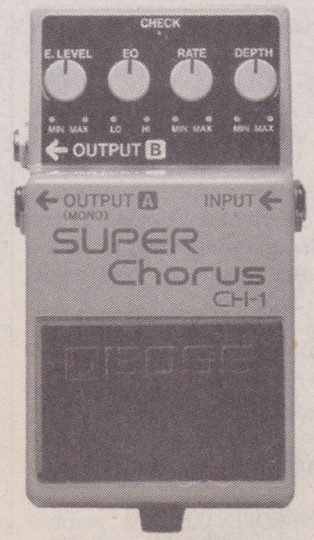
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL WILL PAY YOU CASH TO TURN IN YOUR CHORUS PEDAL!

NO QUESTIONS ASKED!

SPONSORED BY THE MRR COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF TONES AND CLONES

UNDER THE LATEST LAWS OF PUNK, "COOL TONE" IS NO LONGER CONSIDERED AN ACCEPTABLE REASON TO POSSESS ANY TYPE OF CHORUS PEDAL





ANONYMOUS BUYBACK! NO QUESTIONS ASKED! ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

ATTENTION ALL GOTH ROCKERS AND POST-PUNKERS:

MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL IS SPONSORING A CHORUS PEDAL AMNESTY PROGRAM!

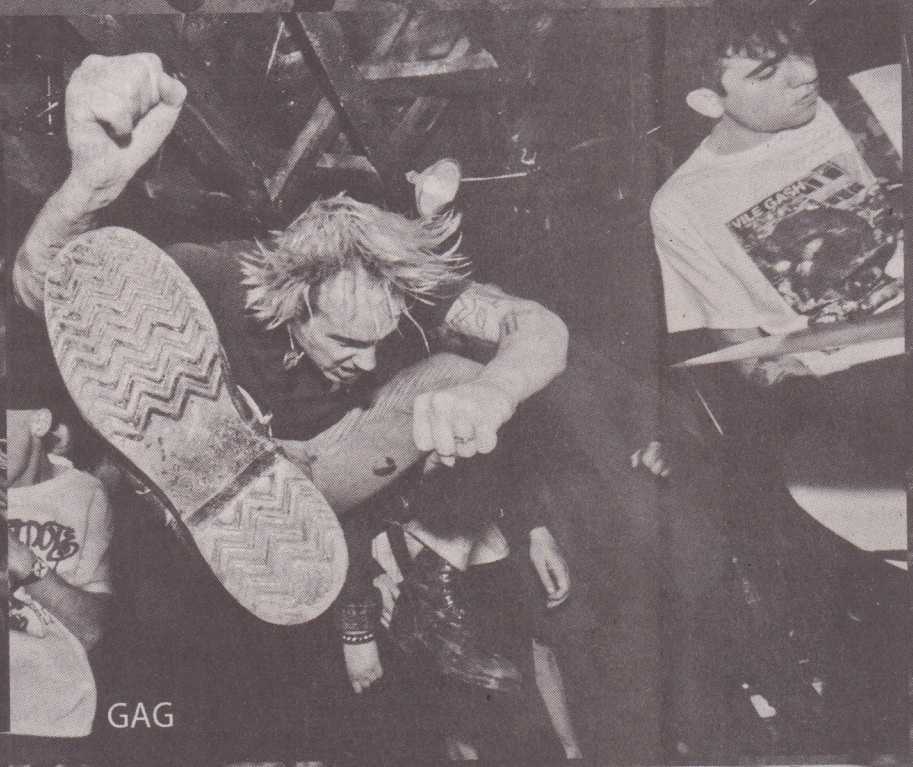
SMALL CLONES, CH-1s, CE-5s; WE'RE TAKING THEM IN ALL CONDITIONS.
THAT'S RIGHT, "COME AS YOU ARE" TO PO BOX 460760, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94146

NO BUYBACK MONEY AVAILABLE AFTER APRIL 1, 2016
BATTERIES WILL NOT BE RETURNED

O INIMIGO

OBSCENE NOIZE LIFE!!

GLUE



GAG

MUECO

GLOSS

VIOLENCE CREEPS

BLEEDING GUM